A SEASONABLE

DISCOURSE

OF THE

Right Use and Abuse

OF

REASON

In MATTERS of

RELIGION.

By PHILOLOGUS.

Ratio recta, est Ratio lumine Spiritus Sancti directa.

LONDON,
Printed for *Tho. Passinger* at the Three Bibles on *London-Bridge*, and *Tho. Wall* next the *Tolsey* in *Bristol*. 1676.

DISCOURSE

OF

PASSION

IN MATTERS OF

RELIGION.

To the Right Honorable

AND

Virtuous LADY, the Lady

MARCHIONESS

OF

WORCESTER.

MADAM,

'*TIS truly observed, That Worldly* Greatneſs *without Virtue and Goodneſs is nothing elſe but the* vigour *of Vice, having both mind and means to be uncontrollably vicious: But Nobility joyned with Virtue renders the perſon truly* Honorable; *the true ſtamp of Nobility and Honour being upon the minds of men, who are not ſo much to be valued by the* grandeur *of their outward Eſtates or Titles, as by their inward Goodneſs.*

Virtue *and ſeriouſneſs in Religion is commendable in all perſons and at all times, but*

more eſpecially in perſons of Your rank and quality at this time and in this Nation, *wherein alſo*, Atheiſm, Scepticiſm, Drollery, *and all manner of Prophaneneſs aboundeth amongſt thoſe that would be thought to excel all others in Wit, and Courage, and Gallantry, and who ſhould give a far better Example to their Inferiors.*

This Atheiſm and Irreligion *which now aboundeth hath been partly occaſioned by the uncharitable unchriſtian heats and animoſities of men of contrary Opinions and* Sentiments *in matters of Religion; together with thoſe great Scandals (which we can never ſufficiently lament) that have been given by ſome* Profeſſors *of the Goſpel in theſe Nations: Hence men of proud ſpirits and corrupt principles have taken occaſion to doubt and queſtion all kind of Religion, and to look on it only as a Political device and invention, which doth no further oblige than the Humane Laws of ſeveral Countries do authorize it. But though theſe common Scandals have been the occaſion, yet the true* ground *at the bottom of ſuch mens prejudice and* ſcepticiſm *is the ſtrictneſs and purity of the Chriſtian Religion, (which of all Religions is the moſt holy and ſpiritual) and which they find lays too great a reſtraint upon their exorbitant Luſts and carnal Paſſions.*

To be good in bad times, to be virtuous and

pious

pious in an Age wherein Vice and Wickedneſs is ſo generally countenanced and practiſed; This, Madam, *adds a great* luſtre *to your Goodneſs and Virtue; And indeed your greateſt Intereſt and Happineſs (which I doubt not but you are ſenſible of) conſiſts in being truly* ſerious *and religious; this is the* whole *Duty of Man, to* fear *God and* keep *His Commandments:* Eccleſ. 12. 13. *The ſerious practice of Religion is that which every conſiderate perſon after all his other diſquiſitions will find to be his* chief *Intereſt, and that which doth deſerve his utmoſt care and diligence: This is the* whole *of Man, or as the* Septuagint *reads it,* this is all; *this indeed ſhould be the great Deſign of Man, as being moſt profitable and advantageous to him.*

Go on, Madam, *in the ſtrength of the* grace *of God, and add* Virtue *to Virtue, that your laſt days and laſt* works *may be your beſt days and beſt works; and that you may practically confute the* Atheiſts *of our times, who walk and talk, and live and die as if there were no God in the World, no certainty, no ſeriouſneſs in Religion: Theſe perſons are under a* Judicial *Blindneſs, deſperately rebelling not only againſt the Light of Goſpel-revelation, but againſt that Light of Reaſon which is in them: God has given them Reaſon and Underſtanding,*

Eyes that they might ſee, Hearts that they might underſtand; but they wilfully ſhut their Eyes againſt that Light of Reaſon, and ſo by the juſt Judgment of God it is taken from them, and they given up to blindneſs of mind and hardneſs of heart, and to the greateſt Spiritual *Plagues and Judgments.*

'Tis to be admired, ſeeing there are ſuch convincing Reaſons and Demonſtrations, *even from the Light of Nature againſt* Atheiſm *and Infidelity, that there ſhould be any ſuch Creatures upon the face of the Earth as theſe* Atheiſts *and Scepticks; when certainly there are none ſuch in* Hell, *for the* Devils *themſelves believe and tremble, ſo that in this reſpect they are worſe than the Devils; And though they pretend to be the* Wits *of the Times, yet for my part I am of opinion with the Noble* Mirandula, *That there is no* Atheiſt *in the world that is in his* wits; *the* rational *Souls of ſuch Monſters being ſunk down into meer* ſenſuality *and brutiſhneſs.* Plutarch *that grave Moraliſt,* [Lib. de Superſtit.] *ſtiles* Irreligion *a kind of* ſtupor, *whereby men are as it were* deprived *of their* ſenſes: *And that it is an exceeding* improper *thing to* aſcribe *true* Reaſon *to thoſe who do not acknowledge and* adore *the Deity. And* Cicero *that wiſe Philoſopher and* Orator [De Nat. Deor.

Deor. lib. 2.] *ſaith he can* hardly *think that man to be in his* right mind *who is deſtitute of* Religion. *And again, why ſhould any one* ſtile *ſuch an one a* Man, *who by what he* ſees *in the World is not* convinced *of a* Deity *and a Providence, and of the Adoration which he owes to that* Deity. *And the* Satyriſt* *ſpeaking of* Religion *and the ſenſe of* divine *things, ſaith,*

* Juv. Sat. 15.

——— *Separat* hoc nos
A *grege* multorum, atque ideo *venerabile* ſoli,
Sortiti ingenium *Divinorumque* capaces.

'Tis this which doth diſtinguiſh *us from* brute *Creatures, that we have* Souls *capable of* divine impreſſions. *So that ſuch perſons have no* juſt *pretence to* Reaſon *who renounce* Religion, *or turn it into meer* Scepticiſm.

But however ſome men for a little *time may offer violence to their* Reaſon *and Conſcience (whilſt they proſper in this World) yet when they are once alarm'd by a violent* Sickneſs *or ſome other great affliction, which at one time or other they ſhall be expos'd unto, then will the ſenſe of a* Deity, *and of Eternal Wrath and Puniſhment* ſeize *upon them, with ſo much the greater force and power, which*

which they ſhall never be able to ſhake off:

Hi ſunt qui *trepidant*, & ad omnia fulgura pallent.

We may truly ſay of the Atheiſts *of our times as* Plato *doth of* Tyrants, *If any* perſon *could but ſee* thorowly *into their Souls, he ſhould find them all their lives full of fear,* guilt *and torments.*

Pectus inuſte *deformant* maculæ, vitiiſque inolevit *Imago.*

Doth now (ſaith an excellent *Author) the* conqueſt *of Paſſions, forgiving of Injuries, doing good,* ſelf-denial, *humility,* patience *under croſſes (which are the real expreſſions of Piety) ſpeak nothing more* noble *and generous, than a luxurious, malicious,* proud *and impatient Spirit? Is there nothing more becoming and agreeable to the* Soul *of Man in exemplary Piety and a holy well-ordered* converſation, *than in the lightneſs and vanity (not to ſay rudeneſs and* debauchery) *of thoſe whom the World accounts the greateſt* Gallants? *Is there nothing more* graceful *and pleaſing in the ſweetneſs,* candor *and ingenuity of a truly Chriſtian temper and diſpoſition, than in the revenge-*

revengeful implacable *Spirit of ſuch whoſe honour is fed by the blood of their Enemies? Is it not more truly* honourable *and glorious to ſerve that God who commandeth the whole World, than to be a* ſlave *to thoſe Paſſions and Luſts which put men upon continual hard ſervice and* torment *them for it, when they have done it? Were there nothing elſe to commend* Religion *to the minds of men, beſides the* tranquility *and calmneſs of ſpirit, that* ſerene *and peaceable temper which follows a good Conſcience whereſoever it dwells, it were enough to make men welcom that* Gueſt *which brings ſuch good entertainment with it; Whereas the amazements,* horrors *and anxieties of mind which at one time or other haunt ſuch who* proſtitute *their Conſciences to a violation of the Laws of God and the Rules of rectified* Reaſon *may be enough to perſwade any rational perſon that Impiety is the greateſt* folly, *and Irreligion the greateſt* madneſs.

The wiſeſt *and greateſt of men in all Ages, at or not long before their* death, *when freeſt from worldly deſigns and* ſenſual *delights, have owned that* God *and His Truth which they did not embrace and acknowledge as they ought to have done in their* lives; *and the nearer death did approach to them the more* ſerious *were they in* Religion, *and did diſclaim and*

abandon

abandon thoſe Atheiſtical *and irreligious courſes wherewith they or ſome of them had been formerly* entangled.

Nimrod *the Founder of the* Aſſyrian *Monarchy, when carried away by Spirits at his death (as* Annius *in his* Beroſus *relates the Story) cryed out*, Oh *one year* more, Oh *one year* more, before I go into *the place* from *whence* I ſhall not *return!*

Ninus *that great King next from* Nimrod *ſave* Belus, *at his Death left this Teſtimony*; Look on this Tomb, and hear where *Ninus* is; whether thou art an *Aſſyrian*, a *Mede*, or an *Indian*, I ſpeak to thee no *frivolous* nor *vain* matters: Formerly I was *Ninus*, and *lived* as thou doeſt; I am now no more than a piece of *earth*: All the Meat that I have like a *Glutton* devoured, all the Pleaſures that I like a *Beaſt* enjoyed, all the beautiful Women that I ſo *notoriouſly abuſed*, all the Riches and Glory that I ſo *proudly poſſeſſed*, I am now deprived of: And when I went into the *inviſible* ſtate, I had neither *Gold*, nor *Horſe*, nor *Chariot*; I that wore the rich *Crown* of *Gold*, am now poor *Duſt*.

Cyrus *the* Perſian *left this* Memento *behind him to all Mankind*, (*as* Plutarch *and others tell us*;) Whoſoever thou art, O Man,

O Man, and whence-ſoever thou comeſt, (for I know thou wilt come to the ſame *condition* that I am in) I am *Cyrus*, who brought the Empire to the *Perſians*: Do not, I beſeech thee, *envy* me this little *piece* of *ground* which covereth my *Body*.

Alexander *the Great*, *who* conquered *the World*, *was at laſt* (*as we find in* Plutarch, Curtius, *and others*) *ſo poſſeſſed with the ſenſe of* Religion, *that he was under much trouble and* anxiety *of ſpirit*, *and look'd upon every little matter as portentous and* ominous; *ſo dreadful a thing* (*ſaith* Plutarch) *is the* contempt *of God*, *which ſooner or later filleth all mens minds with fears and* terrors.

Julius Cæſar *who Conquered ſo many Nations*, *and at laſt ſubdued and poſſeſſed the* Roman *Empire*, *could not Conquer himſelf and his own* Conſcience, *which troubled him with* Dreams *and terrified him with Viſions*, *putting him upon Sacrificing and conſulting all ſorts of* Prieſts *and* Augures, *though he found comfort from none*; *in ſo much as a little before he* died *he was as heartleſs as the* ominous *Sacrifice was that he offered*, *profeſſing to his moſt* intimate *Friends*, *That ſince he had made an end of the* Wars *abroad he had no* Peace *at home*. *The like may be ſaid of* Tiberius Cæſar, Nero, *and other* Roman *Emperours*.

Hadrian *the Emperour celebrated his own Funerals, carrying before him his* Coffin *in triumph when he lived, and when he was a dying cried out lamentably,* Animula vagula blandula, quæ abibis in loca? *Ah poor Soul whither wilt thou go? what will become of thee? Thus the greateſt* Princes *have (eſpecially near their latter end) a deep* ſenſe *of* Religion, *of the Souls* Immortality, *and their Eternal eſtate in another World. Nor did ever any* Prince, *Captain or Law-giver go about any great matter but at length he was glad to take in the aſſiſtance of a God, as* Numa, Lycurgus, Solon, Scipio *and others.*

Titus *and* Nerva *two* Roman *Emperours, had ſuch ſerious thoughts, and were ſo ſenſible of a* Deity *in the Government of the* World, *that neither of them (as the* Hiſtorian *ſaith) was ever ſeen to* ſmile *or* play.

Septimius Severus *that Victorious* Roman *Emperour, having had experience of the vanity of this Worlds Riches and* Greatneſs, *ſaid at his Death,* I have been all things, and it profiteth me nothing.

Charles *the Fifth that Famous* German *Emperour, after twenty three pitch'd Battels, ſix Triumphs, four Kingdoms won, and eight Principalities added to his other Dominions, reſigned all theſe in his life time to his* Son, *and betook himſelf*

himſelf to a retired *life, and to his private* Devotions: *This great and wiſe Prince had his own* Funeral *Celebrated before his face, and left this Teſtimony of the* Chriſtian Religion, *That the* ſincere profeſſion *of it had in it thoſe* ſweets *and* joys *which the Courts of Princes were* ſtrangers *to; grounding his hope and aſſurance of* Salvation *upon the* ſole *Righteouſneſs and Satisfaction of* Chriſt *his Mediator, and not upon his own* Works; *and to this purpoſe divers little* Papers *were written by him and found immediately after his Death, as is Recorded by an* Author *who wrote the Life of* Don Carlos *his Grand-child.*

Philip *the Third King of* Spain, *lying on his death-bed the laſt of* March 1621, *ſent thrice at Midnight for* Florentius *his Confeſſor, who gravely exhorting him patiently to ſubmit to the will of God, the* King *could not chooſe but weep, ſaying,* Lo now my *fatal hour* is at hand, but ſhall I *obtain* eternal *felicity? at which words, great* grief *and trouble of mind* ſeiſing *on the* King, *he ſaid to his Confeſſor,* You have not *hit* upon the *right way* of healing; Is there no other *Remedy? Which words when the Confeſſor underſtood of his* Body, *the* King *replied,* Ah ah, I am not *ſolicitous* for my *Body* or temporary Diſeaſe, but for my *Soul.*

Cardinal Wolſey *that Great Miniſter of*

State, *who for ſome years gave Law to* England *and to other* Nations, *poured out his* Soul *in theſe ſad words;* Had I *been* as *diligent* to *ſerve* my God as I have been to *pleaſe* my Prince, He would not have *forſaken* me now in my gray Hairs.

Sir Francis Walſingham *that great and wiſe* Stateſman, *towards the latter end of his Life grew very* melancholy, *and wrote to the Lord Treaſurer* Burleigh *to this purpoſe;* We have *lived* enough to our *Countrey*, to our *Fortunes*, and to our *Sovereign;* it is now *high time* we *begin* to *live* to *our ſelves*, and to *our God:* In the *multitude* of *Affairs* which have *paſſed* through our Hands there muſt needs be *great miſcarriages*, for which a whole *Kingdom* cannot make our *Peace. Hereupon ſome* Courtiers *being ſent to divert Sir* Francis, Ah, *ſaid he*, while we *laugh* all things are *ſerious* round about us; God is *ſerious*, when He *preſerveth* us, and hath *patience* towards us; Chriſt is *ſerious* when He *dieth* for us, the Holy Ghoſt is *ſerious* when He *ſtriveth* with us, the Holy Scripture is *ſerious* when it is *read* before us, Sacraments are *ſerious* when they are *adminiſtred* unto us; the whole Creation is *ſerious* in *ſerving* God and us: They are *ſerious* in *Heaven* and *Hell*, and ſhall a *man* that hath one *foot* in his *Grave* jeſt and laugh?

Sir

Sir Philip Sidney *(his Son-in-Law) that brave accompliſh'd* Knight *whom Queen* Elizabeth *call'd her* Philip, *and the Prince of* Aurange, *his Maſter, whoſe* Death *was lamented in* Verſe *by the then* Kings *of* France *and* Scotland, *and by the two famous Univerſities of* Oxford *and* Cambridge, *repented at his death of writing his* Pembrokes Arcadia, *and would have committed it to the* flames *himſelf to prevent the kindling of* unlawful *heats in the youthful Readers of it; leaving this* farewel *amongſt his Friends, Above* all things govern your *Wills* and *Affections* by the *Will* and *Word* of God; In me *behold* the *end* of this *World* and all its *vanities.*

Sir John Maſon, *Privy Counſellor to ſeveral Princes, upon his death-bed ſpake thus to ſome of his Friends*, I have ſeen five *Princes*, and been *Privy Counſellor* to four of them; I have obſerved the moſt *remarkable Occurrences* in Forein parts, and been preſent at moſt *tranſactions* for *thirty years* together; And I have learned this after ſo many years *Experience*, That *Serioufneſs* is the greateſt Wiſdom, *Temperance* the beſt Phyſick, a *good Conſcience* is the beſt Eſtate; and were I *to live again*, I would *change* the *Court* for a *Cloiſter*, my *Privy Counſellors* Employment for an *Hermit's* Retirement, and the *whole Life* I lived in the

Palace for *one Hours Enjoyment* of God in the Chappel, all things elſe *forſake me* beſides my *God* and my *Duty*.

The Lord Henry Howard *that Learned* Earl *of* Northampton *being troubled with* Atheiſtical *thoughts and ſuggeſtions, put them all off with this Conſideration*, viz. If I could give any *account* how *my ſelf* or any thing elſe had a being without *God*, how there came ſo *uniform* and ſo *conſtant a conſent of Mankind*, of all *ages, tempers* and *educations* (otherwiſe differing ſo much in their *apprehenſions*) about the *being* of *God*, the *Immortality* of the *Soul*, and *Religion*, I could then be an *Atheiſt*! *And when it was urged that Religion was a* State-policy *to keep men in awe, he replied*, That could not be true, for the greateſt *Politicians* have *ſooner* or *later* felt the *power* of *Religion* in the grievous *laſhes* of their *Conſciences*, and the *dreadfulneſs* of their *apprehenſions* about that *ſtate* wherein they muſt *live* for ever.

Cardinal Richlieu *that great* Politician, *after he had governed the Affairs of* Europe *many years together, confeſſed to* Peter du Moulin, *a Learned Miniſter of the* Reformed *Church in* France, That being forced upon many *irregularities* in his life time by that which they call *Reaſon of State*, he could not tell

how

how to ſatsifie his *conſcience* for ſeveral things, and therefore had many *Temptations* to doubt and disbelieve a *God*, *another World*, and the *Immortality* of the *Soul*, and by that *diſtruſt* to *relieve* his aking Heart, but in vain; for ſo *ſtrong* (*ſaid he*) were the apprehenſions of *God* in his Soul, ſo *clear* the impreſſions of a *Deity* upon the frame of the World, ſo *unanimous* the conſent of Mankind, ſo *powerful* the convictions of his Conſcience, that he could not but *taſte* the *power* of the *World to come*, and ſo *live* as one that muſt *die*, and ſo *die* as one that muſt *live* for ever. *And being asked one day why he was ſo* ſad, *he anſwered*, Monſieur Monſieur, the *Soul* is a ſerious thing, it muſt be either *ſad* here for a moment, or be *ſad* for ever.

Cardinal Mazarine *his Succeſſor, who had for ſeveral years managed the Crown of* France *and the greateſt Affairs of Chriſtendom, diſcourſing one day with a* Sorbon *Doctor concerning the Souls* Immortality *and Mans* Eternal eſtate, *he wept, repeating that Emperours ſaying*, O my poor Soul, whither wilt thou go? *and immediately calling for his Confeſſor, he vowed ten Hours of the Day for* Devotion, *ſeven for* Reſt, *four for* Repaſts, *and but three for* Buſineſs; *ſaying one day to the* Queen Mother, *Madam*, your *favours* have

undone me, and were I to *live* again, I would be a *Capuchin* rather than a *Courtier*.

Salmaſius *that great Scholar, whom the* Learned *men of his time never mention without ſome title of praiſe and commendation, left this world with theſe words in his mouth,* Oh I have *loſt* a world of *time*, that moſt *precious* thing in the World, whereof had I but one *year* longer to live, it ſhould be ſpent in *David*'s Pſalms and *Paul*'s Epiſtles; Oh Sirs! *ſpeaking to his Friends that were about him,* Mind the World *leſs*, and God *more*; all the *Learning* in the World without *Piety* and the true *fear of God*, is nothing worth: *The fear of the Lord that is wiſdom, and to depart from evil that is underſtanding.*

The Learned Grotius *after many Publick* Embaſſies *and Imployments managed and performed by him at home and abroad, and after his many* elaborate *Writings in* Divinity *and other Sciences, having taken an exact Survey of the* Hebrew, Greek *and* Latin *Learning, concluded his life with this Proteſtation,* That he would give all his *Learning* and *Honour* for the plain *Integrity* and harmleſs *Innocency* of *Jean Vrick, who was a devout poor man that ſpent eight Hours of his* time *in* Prayer, *eight in* Labour, *and but eight in* Sleep *and other neceſſaries. And complaining to one that admired*

his

his aſtoniſhing Labours and Induſtry, he uttered theſe words, Ah vitam perdidi operosè nihil agendo: *And to another Friend that deſired him (according to his great Wiſdom and Learning) to ſhew him* briefly *what he ſhould do, he gave him* only *this direction,* Be ſerious.

Perſons of great Eſtate and Dignity in this World muſt expect nevertheleſs to meet with great *croſſes and diſappointments, (of which doubtleſs your* Honour *hath had and will have more and more experience in this* vale *of tears.) Now as the* Sacred *Scriptures do abundantly furniſh us with grounds and motives of* Patience *and ſubmiſſion to the* Will *and Providence of God in every* condition *and under every diſpenſation; ſo there are divers* Heathen *Moraliſts who have from the Light of* Reaſon *and moral* Prudence *propounded many* excellent *Arguments and Conſiderations to perſwade us thereunto; Eſpecially* Epictetus, *who though* lame *and old, ſickly and* deformed, *poor and under ſervitude (being a Slave to* Epaphroditus *one of the* Roman *Courtiers) yet was he an excellent* Philoſopher, *and a man of a moſt noble and* generous *ſpirit; ſome of whoſe* excellent *Sayings to this purpoſe I ſhall here recite.*

This wiſe Moraliſt *ſpeaking of the unreaſonableneſs of* murmuring *at any croſs Events whatſoever, hath this paſſage,* [Diſſertat. lib. 3. cap. 26.]

cap. 26.] What *reaſon* have I (*ſaith he*) to *fight* againſt God? Why ſhould I *deſire* things not *deſireable*? He that *gave* hath *power* to *take away*, and why ſhould I *reſiſt*? This would not only be *great folly* in me to *oppoſe* one that is much *ſtronger*, but great *injuſtice* likewiſe to *fight* againſt a *Benefactor*: We have *received* all that we have and our very *being* from *Him*, and why ſhould we take it ſo *heinouſly* if He be pleaſed to *reſume* ſomething back again?

And ſpeaking further of the reaſonableneſs *of mens reſigning up themſelves to God's diſpoſal, he ſaith*, Quis vero es tu? aut unde veniſti? aut quare? Do you conſider *what* you are, and *whence* you came, and upon what *buſineſs*? Did not He give you a *being* in the World? endue you with ſuch a *nature*? put you into ſuch a *condition* wherein you ſhould be *ſubject* to His *government* and *diſpoſal*? Did not He *appoint* the time, and place, and part which you are to act upon the *Theatre* of this *World*? And this is properly your *Buſineſs*, to apply your ſelf to the fitteſt *means* for performing the *part* allotted to you; and not to take upon you to *murmur* or repine againſt it, for it doth not belong to us to *chooſe* our *parts*, but to *act* them. Would it not *better* become us to go off the *Stage* with *adorations* and *praiſes* of God, for ſo much as He hath permitted

permitted us to hear and ſee, rather than *mutining* againſt Him becauſe we had no more? *And in another place he ſuggeſts this Conſideration*, That our *condition* whilſt we are in this World is *militant*, wherein every one is without *reluctancy* to ſubmit to the *Orders* of his *great* Captain or *General* in whatever He ſhall appoint; whether or no it be to *dig* in the Trenches, or to ſtand upon the *watch*, or to *fight*: Every man cannot be a Commander, and a Common Souldier is to *obey*, not to *diſpute*, or offer *Counſel*; If thou maiſt *refuſe* the condition or work aſſigned thee, why may not another do ſo too? And according to this, what *Order* could there be in the World?

And again; If God would have me (*ſaith Epictetus*) to be *ſick* or *poor*, I will be content to be ſo; whatever *Employment* he will deſign for me, I will not *decline* it, and whatever He *would not* have me *be* or *do*, I will be *againſt* it likewiſe. *And in another place he hath this* excellent *paſſage*; If I had been made a *Nightingale* or a *Swan* (*ſaith he*) I ſhould have employed the time of my *life* in ſuch a way as is ſutable to the condition of thoſe *Creatures*; but being made a Man, capable of ſerving and worſhipping that *Deity* from whom I had my being, 'tis but *reaſon* I ſhould apply

my

my ſelf to this, as being my *proper* work and buſineſs; and therefore hereunto will I *devote* my ſelf, as to that *Employment* to which I am *chiefly* deſigned: I am now as to the condition of my *Body*, lame and old, and under *ſervitude*: *Yet ſtill he concludes it to be his* Duty *wholly to devote himſelf to the* praiſes *and* worſhip *of that* God *who was the Author of his being.*

That muſt needs be much more *deſireable* (*ſaith this Heathen Moraliſt* Epictetus) which is choſen by the *wiſdom* of God, than that which *I chooſe*; A *reluctancy* againſt the *divine Will* is the ground of all *irreligion* and *Atheiſm* in the World. Why may not a man *refuſe* to *obey* God in what He commands, as well as to *ſubmit* to Him in what He *inflicts?* and then what *ground* can there be for any pretence to *Religion?* We ſhould all of us (*ſaith he*) *conform* our minds to the *Will* of *Providence*, and moſt willingly follow whitherſoever He ſhall *lead* us, as knowing it to proceed from the *beſt* and *wiſeſt* contrivance. I do in my *Judgment* more conſent to that which *God* would have, than to that which mine own *inclination* doth *lead* unto; I would *deſire* and *will* juſt ſo and no otherwiſe than as *He* doth. *And in another place*; *Uſe* me (*ſaith he*) as Thou *pleaſeſt*, I do fully

conſent

conſent and ſubmit to it, and ſhall *refuſe* nothing which ſhall ſeem *good* unto Thee: *Lead* me whither-ever Thou wilt, put me into what *condition* Thou pleaſeſt; Muſt I be in a *private* not in a *publick* ſtation, in *poverty* not in *wealth?* I will not only *conſent* to it, but make it my *buſineſs* to *Apologize* for it, to *juſtifie* and maintain before all men, ſuch Thy *dealing* with me to be moſt fitting and *advantageous* to my condition.

To the ſame purpoſe another Heathen Moraliſt (to mention no more) Antoninus [Lib. 10. cap. 25.] *ſaith,* That *man* is to be eſteemed a *Fugitive* and an *Apoſtate* who runs away from his *Maſter:* Now the great *Law-giver* who governs the World is our common *Maſter* and *Ruler*, and His *Will* is the only *Law* we are to ſubmit unto; And therefore for a *man* to be angry or grieved becauſe *things* fall not out according to his *deſire*, what is this but revolting from the *ſupreme* Governour of the World, and declaring enmity againſt Him? *And again;* If God *(ſaith he)* do not take *particular* notice of, and care for me and my affairs, why do I at any time *pray* to Him? And if He doth exerciſe a *ſpecial* Providence towards all *Events*, no doubt but He doth *conſult* well and wiſely about them; nor would He ſuffer any *hurt* or prejudice to befal

befal me, unleſs it were for a greater *good* upon ſome other account; and in this I ought to *acquieſce. And in another place; (ſaith the ſame Author)* I refer *every thing* that *befals* me to *God*, as the Contriver of it, by whom *all Events* are diſpoſed in a *wiſe* Order.

Now what are theſe great and excellent *Sayings of theſe* two *wiſe* Philoſophers *and other grave* Moraliſts *(that might be mentioned) but the ſame in effect with thoſe* divine *Sayings in the* Sacred *Scriptures:* Pſal. 25. 10. Job 1. 15,17. and 2. 10. Exod. 34. 6. 1 Sam. 3. 18. Lam. 3. 22,39. Job 5. 7. and 34. 31. and 40. 4. and 33. 12,13. Pſal. 39. 9. and 8. 4. and 94. 12. and 118. 18. and 119. 75. 2 Sam. 15. 26. Iſa. 45. 9. and 64. 8. Heb. 12. 5,8,10,11. Prov. 19. 3. Rom. 8. 28. and 9. 20. 1 Cor. 10. 13. and 11. 32. 2 Cor. 1. 5. Rev. 3. 19.

Religion *(to uſe the words of a* late *Learned Biſhop* * *)* hath a *firm* and deep *foundation* in the Nature and *Reaſon* of Mankind: *But yet we muſt not ſo* exalt *Reaſon or the* Principles *of* natural *Religion, as to derogate in the leaſt from the* neceſſity *and uſefulneſs of* divine *Revelation, or to* extenuate *the great and* unparallel'd *Bleſſing and Benefit of the* Chriſtian *Religion and the Doctrine of the* Goſpel *of Chriſt, which though it* tranſcends, *yet it is*

* *Dr.* Wilkins *Biſhop of* Cheſter.

not

not contrary to the Dictates and Sentiments *of Reaſon; For it is but* reaſonable *that we ſhould* acquieſce *in the Teſtimony and Authority of* God *the* ſupreme *Being, who neither can nor will deceive us.*

We ſhould not deſpiſe any of thoſe Advantages (*ſaith the* grave *Author of* The whole Duty of Man*) which may improve our *Reaſon*, exalt the *Man* and depreſs the *Beaſt* in us; Yet ſure we ſhall derogate very *impiouſly* from Chriſt's *Prophetick* Office, if we allow not *Divinity* to be the ſupreme and *nobleſt* Science, ſuch as is to be *ſerved* and attended, not *regulated* and governed by thoſe *inferiour*: But that juſt *order* ſeems now to be *inverted*, Divine Learning is brought down to Humane, and the ſimplicity of *Chriſtian* Doctrine ſo *perplexed* and *confounded* with *Philoſophical* Niceties, that *Plato* and *Ariſtotle* are become the *Umpires* of our Religion, and we muſt go ask *Heathens* how far we ſhall be Chriſtians. Thoſe *deep* things of God, (as the Apoſtle calls them, 1 *Cor.* 2.10.) and of which he pronounces the *Natural* man an *incompetent* Judge, are yet brought before that *Tribunal*, ſubjected to be ſcanned by Rules of *Art*; but alas our *Line* is

* *Cauſes of the Decay of* Chriſtianity, *cap.* 9. *pag.* 255.

too

too ſhort to ſound thoſe *Depths. Thus far he.*

Madam, *This* Book (*which is Dedicated to Your* Honour) *treats of the* Right *Uſe and Abuſe of* Reaſon *in* Divine *matters: There are* two *extremes which men are apt to run into; ſome aſcribe too much to* Natural *Light and Reaſon in* Religious *concernments, and others aſcribe too little. As we ſhould give to* God *the things that are* God's, *and to* Cæſar *the things that are* Cæſar's, (*according to that ſaying of our Bleſſed* Saviour, *Matth.* 22. 21.) *ſo we ſhould give to* Faith *the things that belong to* Faith, *and to* Reaſon *the things that belong to* Reaſon. *And herein,* Madam, *You may meet with ſome Paſſages in this* Treatiſe (*if You pleaſe to peruſe it*) *which may by the* Bleſſing *of God miniſter ſome* Light *and Direction to You.*

A TABLE of the chief Heads of this TREATISE.

CHAP. I.

Of diſtinguiſhing betwixt Faith and Reaſon. Page 1

1. HEre is ſhewed, that it requires much ſpiritual Skill rightly to diſtinguiſh them.
2. That Morality is one thing, and Chriſtianity another.

CHAP. II.

Shewing that Reaſon is uſeful both in Civil and Divine things. Yet withal 'tis preſuppoſed. 4

1. That the Light of Reaſon in us is much darkened.
2. That it wrangles againſt the greateſt Myſteries of the Goſpel.
3. That men of great Reaſon and parts have promoted the greateſt errors.

CHAP. III.

How far the Light of Reaſon extendeth. Here is ſhewed. 6

1. That this light is but a derivative light, like the light of a Candle, and not like the light of the Sun.
2. 'Tis but a diminutive light.
3. 'Tis notwithſtanding a quiet and peaceable light ſo far as it goes.
4. 'Tis an aſcendant light, and cannot find the chiefeſt good in things below.

CHAP. IV.

How the Heathen Philoſophers themſelves have complain'd of great defects in Nature and Reaſon. 13

1. Here are ſeveral Inſtances given.
2. *Solomon* himſelf was ſenſible of much darkneſs, though his intellectual Lamp burnt far brighter then others.
3. Chriſtians ſhould not magnifie the light and power of Nature, the defects whereof are acknowledged by moral Heathens.

CHAP. V.

Of them that give too little to the Light of Reaſon. As 15

1. Such as will not admit of a rational diſcourſe in matters of Religion.

2. Such as rely on *Enthuſiaſms.*
3. Such as hold an *annihilation* of the faculties of the Soul in Regeneration.
4. Such as will not be regulated by Reaſon in civil Circumſtances relating to worſhip, but cauſe diſorder and confuſion in Church-Aſſemblies.

CHAP. VI.

Of thoſe that aſcribe too much to Reaſon. As 18
1. The *Socinians*, who reject the greateſt myſteries of the Goſpel, becauſe they cannot comprehend them by their corrupt Reaſon.
2. *Pellagius* and his followers (whereof there are many in our times) who derogate from the Grace of God and extol the power of Nature.

CHAP. VII.

Of the uſe of humane Reaſon in civil matters. Here is ſhewed. 21
1. That it is the moſt rational and prudent way to be governed by known Laws.
2. That ſuch Laws are beſt as are moſt agreeable to Reaſon, and tend moſt to the publick good.
3. That the moſt rational Men are fitteſt to be Law-makers.
4. That ſuch are alſo of beſt ability and capacity to adminiſter the Laws and Government.

CHAP VIII.

Of the exerciſe of Reaſon in Church affairs. 27
1. Reaſon ſuggeſts that men ſhould joyn together in Societies for the viſible worſhip of God,
2. That there ſhould be order and Government in theſe Societies, and that all ſhould not be Rulers, but ſome ſhould obey.
3. That ſuch as adminiſter the worſhip of God in Religious Societies ſhould have due reverence and maintenance.
4. That every Chriſtian ought to joyn himſelf to a Church-ſociety, that he may viſibly worſhip God with others.
5. That men ought not to aſſign any other Conditions of Church-communion then what Chriſt hath preſcribed in his Word.
6. That ſuch as are admitted into a Church-ſociety ſhould freely conſent to be governed by the Laws and Rules thereof.
7. That they ſhould remain in ſuch a Society, and not break off communion on ſlight grounds.
8. That

8. That all things in Church-aſſemblies ſhould be adminiſtred with much ſeriouſneſs and gravity, that ſo the Ordinances of God may be rendred majeſtical.
9. That there muſt be ſome way or other for determining differences ariſing in ſuch Societies,

Here is ſhewed.

1. That Appeals are founded upon the Law of Nature and Reaſon.
2. That it is a more rational and prudent way to have Controverſies determin'd by a grave Aſſembly of godly learned Paſtors, then by a few ingaged perſons in a particular Society.

CHAP. IX.

The Light of Reaſon proves that there is a God. 40
1. By the frame of this World.
2. By the Original of all things; here it is demonſtrated that the Creatures cannot have their being or beginning from themſelves.
3. That there muſt be a firſt Cauſe or Mover of all, elſe there would be before every Mover another Mover, and ſo in *infinitum*.
4. It appears to the eye of Reaſon that there is a God, by the diſtinction of good and evil.
5. By the great and glorious Miracles that have been wrought in the World.
6. By the wiſe governing and ordering of the ſeveral Creatures, and the plentiful proviſion that is made for them.
7. By the teſtimony of mans Conſcience, which ſheweth that there is a ſupreme Judge, that commandeth the inward thoughts, and bindeth the Conſcience.
8. By the vaſt deſires and capacity of mans Soul, which will not be ſatisfied without the enjoyment of the chiefeſt good.
9. By the continual aſſaults of Satan, who would utterly extinguiſh the knowledge of God in men.
10. By the wonderful preſervation of the Church of God, which though it hath been as a burning Buſh yet it is not conſumed.

This Principle, That there is a God, hath ſhewed it ſelf even in Atheiſts, *eſpecially in three Caſes.*
1. When they have been ſurrounded with difficulties.
2. In the time of bodily ſickneſs.

3. When old age comes, and multitude of years teach them experience.

CHAP. X.

The Immortality of the Soul of man proved by Reason 54

1. Because it abstracts from that which it understands, all quantity, quality, time, place, &c.
2. Because the Soul receives impressions of Immortality, and is spiritual in its operations.
3. No mortal corruptible thing can satisfie the desires of the Soul.
4. If Mans Soul were not immortal then the sensitive Creatures would excel Man.
5. The Soul is not subject to motion, being most perfect when most free from motion, therefore she is not corruptible.
6. Another Reason is taken from the Justice of God.
7. From the universal consent of all Nations in one kind of Religion or other.

CHAP. XI.

The truth of the Christian Religion proved by Reason. 62

1. From the Antiquity of it
2. From the excellent way and means of atonement and propitiation held forth therein.
3. From the glorious divine Miracles and Works of Christ and his Apostles.

Objections against the same answered.

4. From the precious excellent Doctrine and Life of Jesus.
5. From the nature and success of Christs Kingdom.
6. From the strange Conversions that have been wrought by the Christian Religion.
7. From the desperate opposition of Satan and his Instruments against it, notwithstanding which it hath still prevailed.

Here is discovered the unreasonableness and absurdity

1. Of the heathenish Idolatry.
2. Of the *Jews* Enmity against Christ and the Christian Religion.
3. Of the *Mahumetan* Superstition.

CHAP. XII.

The Divine Authority of the sacred Scriptures proved by Reason. 97

1. Because no other or better Revelation of Gods Will can be produced.

2. The

2. The Old Teſtament hath been throughout all Ages witneſſed to, and wonderfully preſerved by the *Jews*.
3. The whole univerſal Church of Chriſt have all along witneſſed the Divine Authority of the Old and New Teſtament, even to the death.
4. God hath confirmed the Authority thereof by great and ſtrange Miracles from Heaven.
5. The Scriptures are the moſt antient and authentical of any writing.
6. The ſtile, order, contexture, and frame of the Scripture, ſhew the Divine Authority thereof.
7. Another Reaſon is taken from the wonderful powerful effects of the Doctrine of the Scriptures.
8. From the admirable harmony and conſent thereof.
9. The matter treated of therein is divine and wonderful.
Here are mentioned five notes of a Divine Power,
10. The end which the Scriptures aim at is divine and heavenly.

CHAP. XIII.

Of the uſe of Reaſon in the interpreting of Scripture, and judging of Controverſies. 119
1. Here is a diſcovery of the unreaſonableneſs of the Popiſh implicite Faith, and blind Obedience.
2. Their Doctrine of *Tranſubſtantiation* is made apppear.
1. To be againſt Senſe.
2. Againſt Reaſon.
3. Againſt Faith.
3. 'Tis alſo ſhewed, that there is a twofold Judgment in matters of Religion, one in *foro publico*, another in *foro privato*,
4. That every private Chriſtian ought to make uſe of his Reaſon, and to exerciſe a Judgment of diſcretion in trying Spirits and Doctrines,
This is proved by ſix cogent Arguments.
Objections againſt this tenet and practiſe anſwered.

CHAP. XIV.

Of the Internal teſtimony of the Holy Ghoſt, proving the Divine Authority of the Scriptures. 123
1. It is here ſhewed, that this *Teſtimony* is more ſatisfactory to the Conſcience then all other proofs.
2. That a Chriſtians Faith ſhould be ultimately and finally reſolved into the *Teſtimony* of the Holy Ghoſt, and not into the Teſtimony of the Church which is but humane.

3. The Popiſh *circle* is deſcribed, and the Proteſtant Doctrine herein vindicated,
4. Some Rules and Cautions concerning the Teſtimony of the Spirit are here propounded to prevent miſtakes.

CHAP. XV.

Shewing when Reaſon is rightly uſed, and when abuſed to the prejudice of the Spirits Teſtimony in the Scriptures. 133

1. Reaſon is the Organ which lets into the Soul the Light of Faith.
2. It being overpowered by the Spirit of God, ſees the greateſt reaſonableneſs in the Truths and Wayes of Chriſt.
3. Reaſon is exceeding uſeful in maintaining the Doctrine of Chriſt.
4. Nevertheleſs we ſhould not make Reaſon the Judge in Divine matters, nor ſubject the Authority of the Scriptures to our Reaſon, as *Socinians* do.

Three Arguments againſt it.

CHAP. XVI.

Of the difference betwixt the meer rational and ſpiritual man, and their Acts about ſpiritual things. Here is ſhewed. 142

1. That the Spiritual man hath Chriſt formed in him, and lives the life of Chriſt, which the meer rational man doth not.
2. That the divine Principle which acts the Spiritual man, is more then the improvement of the moſt excellent, natural, and rational abilities.
3. That man is paſſive in the new ſpiritual Birth, and cannot by all his Reaſon diſcern, how this ſpiritual life is wrought.
4. How and wherein the ſpiritual Mans Acts and Operations do far tranſcend the meer rational Mans.
5. They differ in the nature and effects of their Faith in reference to Chriſt and the Promiſes, in five Particulars.

CHAP. XVII.

Proving that none can be ſaved by the meer improvement of the Light of Reaſon. 152

1. Divers of the Fathers, and ſome modern Writers have err'd in this Point.
2. Four things are laid down for the better opening of it: God might reveal his Son (if he ſo pleaſed) in an extraordinary way to ſome Heathens.
3. It is proved by nine Arguments, that no rational moral Heathen can be ſaved without faith in Chriſt as Mediator.

One or two material Objections anſwered. CHAP.

CHAP. XVIII.

Of rational and intellectual delights. Here is ſhewed. 162

1. That every being chuſeth to it ſelf ſome kind of pleaſure. As
   1. God, who is the chiefeſt Being.
   2. The Angels.
   3. Men that have rational Souls.
   4. The ſenſitive Creatures.
2. In what particulars the delights of Reaſon, and of the Mind do far excel the pleaſures of the Body.

CHAP. XIX.

Shewing that Reaſon, and much more Faith, doth fortifie a man againſt the exceſſive fear of death. 172.

1. Here are eight Conſiderations drawn from Reaſon againſt the ſlaviſh fear of death.
2. Seven Arguments are alſo drawn from Faith in the Word of God againſt the fear of death.
3. The famous ſayings of ſome dying Chriſtians are mentioned.

CHAP. XX.

That humane Reaſon, and the due exerciſe thereof is a great mercy. 187

1. This is opened in ſome particulars.
2. It is here ſhewed, that man who hath a reaſonable Soul is wonderfully made, like a curious piece of Embroydery.
   1. In reſpect of his Body, and the members thereof.
   2. In reſpect of his rational Soul, wherein Man far excels other Creatures.

   Five things mentioned relating to the excellency of the reaſonable Soul.
3. In reſpect of his new ſpiritual Birth, and participation of the Divine nature.

CHAP. XXI.

A Recapitulation of particulars touching the uſe of humane Reaſon and Knowledge in reference to the Chriſtian Religion. 195

1. Here are five Conſiderations premiſed,
2. The excellency and uſe of humane Reaſon and Knowledge is particularly held forth. As
   1. Some that have been famous Inſtruments in the Church of God have abounded therein.

2. The Penmen of the holy Scriptures make uſe of it.
3. It helps us to underſtand the Grammatical literal ſenſe, and the Chronology and Propheſies of Scripture.
4. It's uſeful for convincing Heathens and Infidels.
5. In trying Spirits and Doctrines, comparing Scripture with Scripture.
6. As a paſſive qualification of the ſubject for Faith and Repentance, in which caſe there muſt be a Principle of Reaſon.

CHAP. XXII.

How and in what reſpects Reaſon comes ſhort, and is abuſed in Divine things. 206

1. Reaſon cannot diſcover the myſtery of the Trinity, Incarnation of Chriſt, *&c.*
2. Nor the ſinfulneſs and corruption of mans heart and nature.
3. It cannot preſcribe the true worſhip of God.
4. Nor enable us perfectly to perform natural and civil Actions without the general aſſiſtance of God.
5. Our aſſent to the Goſpel ſhould be the aſſent of Faith, and not of meer Reaſon.
6. The Scripture and not Reaſon is the Rule for a Chriſtian to walk by in ſpiritual matters; he muſt be crucified to his Reaſon.

Here is alſo ſhewed in ſix particulars, when and wherein humane Reaſon and Knowledge is abuſed, and ſo becomes dangerous to the Chriſtian Religion.

OF THE RIGHT USE & ABUSE OF REASON IN *MATTERS of RELIGION.*

CHAP. I.

Of diſtinguiſhing between Faith *and* Reaſon.

AS it requires much ſpiritual skill and judgment rightly to diſtinguiſh between the Law and the Goſpel, the Covenant of works and the Covenant of grace; to give the Law its due and the Goſpel its due, whereupon *Luther* was wont to ſay, That he who can thus diſtinguiſh is the beſt *Divine*: So truly it requires much ſpiritual skill and wiſdom rightly to diſtinguiſh between the Light of Nature, and the Light of Grace, between *Reaſon* and Faith, in matters of *Religion*;

That as Chriſt bids us render unto *God* the things that are Gods, and to *Ceſar* the things that are *Ceſars*; So we ſhould give unto *Faith* the things that are Faith's, and to *Reaſon* the things that are Reaſon's: To Faith her full ſcope and latitude, and to *Reaſon* alſo her juſt bounds and rights. May we not wiſh, that many great *Profeſſors* of the Goſpel did but equalize in their practiſe (as to *moral* Juſtice and Faithfulneſs) ſome *Heathens*, that were only endued with the Light of Reaſon and moral Virtues? Did not theſe go further with their *Candle-light*, than the other do with their *Sun-beams?* And will they not riſe up in judgment againſt them that do ſo groſly abuſe the Light of the Goſpel, which infinitely tranſcends the Light of Nature? Perhaps this may be the reaſon, why ſome vain *Scriblers* in our days, place Religion chiefly in natural *Improvements* and moral Virtues, becauſe there is ſo little moral Juſtice and Honeſty amongſt Men; yea amongſt many forward Profeſſors morality will go very far: But yet though Men be unjuſt, and exceeding defective in their *morals*, we ſhould not therefore derogate from the Spirit and Grace of God; we ſhould not confound *Nature* and Grace, *Divinity* and Philoſophy, *Faith* and humane Reaſon, Chriſt and *Socrates*, *Paul* and *Plato*; Nor the Church of God and the Chriſtian Religion with the School of *Ariſtotle*: For this ſinful mixture and compoſition, the *Schoolmen* are worthily blamed, who by advancing *Ariſtotle* in their Writings, and aſcribing too much to moral Virtues, have exceedingly darkned the purity of the Goſpel, and in a manner quite excluded the righteouſneſs of Chriſt as Mediator, and the gracious powerful operations of His Spirit. *Eraſmus* himſelf, ſpeaking of the *Arians*, ſaith,

That

That they were the *more dangerous* and *peſtilent*, becauſe they were ſo much acquainted with the *Ariſtotelian* Subtilties. The like may be ſaid of ſome curious Philoſophical Wits and Pens, in this divided *Church* and Nation, who have in effect transformed the Goſpel of Chriſt into a meer *Syſtem* of Morality. Indeed a true ſincere Chriſtian is the moſt juſt and moral of any man, but it is not his moral Virtues and Endowments, but his Spiritual *union* with Chriſt, that makes him accepted with God, and puts him into a ſtate of Salvation. Let *Reaſon* be permitted with the *Gibeonites* to hew wood and draw water for the *Sanctuary*, but let it not ruſh into the *Holy* of Holies, into the Boſom-ſecrets of God, into the deep Myſteries of the Goſpel: *Reaſon* may not come into theſe Seas, except ſhe ſtrike her *top-ſail*; here ſhe muſt ſubmit and captivate her ſelf to the obedience of Faith. There is reaſon indeed for that which faith believeth, [b] but yet *reaſon* muſt be help'd by *faith*, and rais'd up to Spiritual Objects by *divine* revelation: As one that hath dim Eyes can ſee better by the help of Spectacles; and to chuſe a right Jewel we uſe the Skill of a *Lapidary*; ſo if we would yield a firm aſſent to Divine Truths and Principles, we muſt be help'd with light from above, even with divine and ſupernatural Revelation: Otherwiſe we ſhall give but a weak and doubtful aſſent thereunto, which we call Opinion: The works of Creation, and the light of Natural *Reaſon*, enabling us to diſcern the Characters of God ſtamped upon the Creatures, will prove, That there is a God, or

(a) *Hoc ipſo fuere peſtilentiores quod Ariſtotelicis argutiis eſſent inſtructi.* Eraſmus.

(b) *Dr.* Preſton *on the Attributes of God.*

Supreme Being: But as for thoſe Truths that are meerly Supernatural, as the *Trinity* of Perſons, the *Hypoſtatical* Union in Chriſt, and other great Myſteries of the Goſpel, theſe are only known by revelation, and have no prints or foot-ſteps in the Creatures to diſcern them by; of which we ſhall ſpeak more fully and particularly in the following part of this *Treatiſe*.

CHAP. II.

Shewing that Reaſon *(though much weakned) is of* good uſe *both in* civil *and* divine *things.*

LEt it be granted (which will not be denied by any *ſober* Chriſtian) 1. That the light of *Reaſon* is exceedingly darkned and clouded, that the Eye of Reaſon is weakned and vitiated, that with *Leah* ſhe is blear-eyed; That this daughter of the morning is fallen from her *primitive* beauty, from her original *vigor* and perfection: And ſo fallen, that ſhe cannot ſavingly apprehend or comprehend the things of God. Yea, 2. *Reaſon* as it is now corrupted and perverted in man, doth oppoſe the Goſpel of Chriſt, and wrangle againſt the myſteries of Salvation, which it doth not underſtand. 3. That the fouleſt and blackeſt *Errors*, that ever were broached in the Church of Chriſt, have ſhrowded themſelves under the fair diſguiſe of *Reaſon*, and men of the greateſt *reaſon* and parts have often fallen into and promoted ſuch Errors, and have enſnared many others by their ſubtil diſputes and *reaſonings*. Let all this be granted, yet ſtill there is a good uſe of

reaſon,

reaſon, ſo ſhe keep her place, and go not beyond her due bounds, both in matters *civil* and *religious*: What though the light of *reaſon* ſhine not ſo clearly and brightly as it was wont! ſhall it therefore be quite extinguiſh'd? If the Picture have loſt its former *gloſs* and beauty, the oriency of its Colours, the *elegancy* of its Lineaments, the comelineſs of its proportion, muſt it therefore be totally defaced and broken in pieces? Becauſe men have not ſo much *Reaſon* as they ſhould, will they therefore reſolve to have none at all? Our Faith and Love, and all our gracious acts and religious performances are weak and imperfect; *Iniquity* is mingled with our holy things; what then! Shall we therefore utterly neglect and reject them? Shall we not own and bleſs God for them? The light of *reaſon* is the gift of God, which ſhould be thankfully acknowledged by us: And though it be not ſo bright and powerful as to enter into the *Sanctum Sanctorum*, and pierce within the Veil, yet it may lye in the Porch and at the Gate of the Temple, and be as a *Door-keeper* in the Houſe of God. Though *Reaſon* be not a *Jacob*'s Ladder to climb up to Heaven by, yet doubtleſs we may uſe it as a Staff to walk with upon Earth. If any be ſo malapert and preſumptuous, as to ſet *Agar* above her Miſtreſs, and make Faith wait like a Serving-man at the elbow of corrupt and *diſtorted* Reaſon, if they go about to ſubject and ſubordinate the glorious Myſteries of Chriſt (which are to be adored) to their vain reaſonings, and will reject them, becauſe they cannot by their reaſon comprehend them; let them bear the blame, as they are well worthy of their arrogancy and preſumption.

CHAP. III.

How far the light *of* Reaſon *extendeth, and what* kind *of* light *it is.*

THere is a light in mans *reaſon*, though far inferiour to that of Faith: Both theſe lights proceed from God, the Fountain of Light, who hath ſet up the *Sun* to rule the day, and the *Moon* to rule the night: *Mens hominis lucerna domini*, the *Reaſon* or Underſtanding of a *man* is the *Candle* of the Lord, *Prov.* 20. 27. This was ſpoken by *Salomon*, a man of rais'd and clear *Intellectuals*, in whom this *Candle* of the Lord did ſhine with far more brightneſs than in other *Princes*: And though he was look'd upon as a *Star* of the firſt magnitude, nay as a *Sun* ſhining in the Firmament, in reſpect of his wiſdom and knowledge, yet he calleth it only the *Candle* of the Lord, uſing a very humble and modeſt expreſſion touching the reaſon and underſtanding of man, which as we ſhould not go about to extinguiſh or put out, ſo neither ſhould we extol and magnifie the ſame above what is written: For, *Firſt*, this light of Reaſon (as an ingenious *Writer* truly obſerves) is (c) *lumen derivatum*, a derivative light. 'Tis not the fountain of light, but only a few drops derived from the fountain. *Light* we know is not originally in the Candle, which ſhines only with a borrowed light, and ſo doth the light of *Reaſon*, and all other created Excellencies: Reaſon is but *ſcintilla divinæ*

(c) Nathan. Culverwell *Diſcourſe of the Light of Nature.*

divinæ lucis, 'tis but *divinæ particula auræ*: The rational Immortal Soul of man, this Intellectual Lamp, was firſt lighted and ſet up by God Himſelf, and hath its total dependance upon Him, both for its beeing, and for its perpetual continuation: Nor is this *Candle* lighted out of the Eſſence of God Himſelf, as if it were a part of His *Eſſence*. This (as *Calvin* ſaith) were to divide and rend in pieces the Divine *Eſſence*, which is *indiviſible* and incommunicable, and doubtleſs it were a far more tolerable errour, to make the light of a Candle a piece of the *Suns* Eſſence, than to imagin, that this *Intellectual* Lamp, the Soul of Man, is a part of the Divine Nature: And therefore *Seneca*, as wiſe as he was, did expreſs much folly and ignorance in *deifying* the Soul of Man, *Quid aliud vocas animum* (ſaith he) *quam deum in humano corpore hoſpitantem.* That is, what leſs *Title* or Dignity can you beſtow upon Man's *Soul*, than that of a God dwelling in a Houſe of Clay. Whereas the Rational Soul and Underſtanding of Man, is but a weak and faint reſemblance of God Himſelf, who is infinite in Knowledge and Underſtanding, and who ſees and knows all things perfectly in an inſtant, by His own uncompounded and indiviſible Eſſence: Angels are above *Syllogiſms* and rational diſcourſes, how much more is God Himſelf, whoſe Knowledge is not in the leaſt improved, by deducing and collecting one thing out of another, in a way of reaſoning, as we do! *Cognitio Dei non eſt ratiocinativa, non eſt diſcurſiva. Secondly*, The light of *Reaſon* in Man, is but *lumen tenue & diminutum*: 'Tis but a diminutive light. How far diſtant is the light of a Candle from the light of a Star? how far from the brightneſs of the Sun? This Candle or light of Reaſon, when it was

firſt ſet up, before there was any *thief* in it, even then it had but a limitted and reſtrained light; God ſaid unto it, Thus far ſhall thy light go, and no further: *Adam*, in the ſtate of Innocency, was not to crown himſelf with his own *ſparks*, much leſs ſhould we think to ſave our ſelves by the *Glimmerings* of our depraved Reaſon: God never intended that the Creature ſhould reſt ſatisfied with its own *Candle-light*, but that it ſhould have recourſe to Him who is the *Fountain* of Light, that it might ſee *light* in His *Light*. *Lucifer*, that would needs be an independant light, and ſhine with his own beams, how is he fallen into perpetual darkneſs and torment! yea, and *Adam*'s Candle aſpiring to be a *Sun* has burnt the dimmer ever ſince: This *Candle* of the Lord in the regenerate Soul, and much more in the unregenerate, knows but little of God and ſpiritual things, whilſt the Soul is *impriſoned* in the Body, and abſent from the Lord: But when it is taken out of this dark Lanthorn, *in ſtatu ſeparato*, or *in ſtatu conſummato*, then it ſhall know infinitly more of God and ſpiritual things than now it doth. *Thirdly*, The light of *Reaſon*, as far as it goes, is *lumen tranquillum*, 'tis a quiet and peaceable light: Certainly the more *reaſon* and judgment Men have, the more calm and *ſerene* they are: And if Men were more *regulated* by reaſon, there would be more concord and harmony in the world, yea and in the Church of Chriſt, than there is. This *Candle* would ſhine more clearly and ſteadily, were it not for the boiſterous winds of Mens Paſſions, which diſturb and darken it; nor would there be ſuch *ruptures*, rents, *alienations*, animoſities, *ſupplantings*, diſorders, and *inconſiſtencies* amongſt us, if the ſoft and ſober voice of reaſon were more attended to: *Reaſon* would make

ſome

ſome differences kiſs and be friends; it would quench many a flame, and bind up many a wound; it would end many petty perſonal quarrels, for the good of the whole and the welfare of the *community*: The Soul is toſs'd up and down with paſſion and groundleſs ſuſpition, but anchors upon judgment and reaſon. This calmneſs and quietneſs of reaſon doth never commend it ſelf more, than in complying with Faith, in not oppoſing thoſe high and tranſcendent myſteries, which are above its own reach and capacity; ſuch a modeſty and humility our *reaſon* ſhould always have and practiſe, namely, to ſubmit and ſubordinate it ſelf to all ſuch Divine Revelations as are above its own ſphere; though it cannot graſp them or pierce into them, yet it ſhould ever reſolve with all humility and gratitude to admire them, to bow its head and adore them. One light ſhould not oppoſe another; *lumen fidei* and *lumen rationis* may ſhine both together, though in ſeveral *Orbs*, and with far different brightneſs. This *Candle* of the Lord ſhould not be impatient of a ſuperiour light, of a brighter *Sun*: The light of *reaſon* ſhould no more prejudice the light of Faith, than the light of a Candle doth prejudice the light of a *Star* or the light of the *Sun*; why ſhould there be any ſtrife between Faith and Reaſon, ſeeing they are brethren, both ſpringing from the ſame Father of Lights, though the one be much ſuperiour to the other? Indeed there are ſuch infinite Treaſures of Grace and Glory diſplayed in the Goſpel, as do far tranſcend Mans *Reaſon*, and therefore muſt be apprehended by Faith, which is the *evidence* of things not ſeen, the *ſubſtance* of things hoped for: Nature and Reaſon are not ſufficiently proportioned to ſuch high and tranſcendent Objects; here are ſuch depths, ſuch

plecnaſms,

pleonasms, such weights of glory, as do *opprimere ingenium humanum*. If the Sons of Men could have extracted all the Spirits of Reason, and made them meet in one head, nay if *Angels* and Men could have united and *concentricated* all their Reason and Knowledge, yet they would never have been able to find out and discover such profound and mysterious Excellencies, as the Eye of true Evangelical Faith beholdeth in an instant. Revealed Truths shine with their own beams and brightness, and do not borrow their lustre from the dim *Candle* of our *Reason*; whatsoever God, who is Truth it self, reveals must needs be true; *Reason* is so modest, that it will not contradict this, for it doth acknowledge a *Deity*, and the unquestionable Truth of a Deity. In all believing, there is an assent, a yielding to him that speaks, by virtue of his own authority, though he doth not prove and evince it any other way, than by meer testimony: *Reason* it self dictates thus much to us, that we are to believe such a one whom we have no reason to distrust; for without some faith, there would be no *commerce* in the world, there's no trading without some trusting; a general and total incredulity would threaten a present and fatal dissolution to human society: Men may deceive us (for none of them are infallible) but God, being Truth it self, an Eternal, Immutable Truth, and all Revelations flowing from Him being certain and infallible like Himself; hence it is, that His naked Word is a sufficient demonstration; and he that will not believe a God, who is Truth it self, is no better than an *Atheist*, yea in some respect he is worse than a Devil, for the *Devils* believe and tremble. Though there be many things in the Sacred Scriptures, which are beyond the comprehension

benſion of Reaſon, yet coming to us in the Name of the God of Truth, and bearing the ſtamp and *ſignature* of Divine Authority, it is not contrary, but agreeable to *Reaſon*, that we ſhould believe them and aſſent to them. Some there are that endeavour to maintain this Opinion, That *revealed* Truths, though they could not be found out by *Reaſon*, yet when they are once revealed, *Reaſon* can evince and demonſtrate them; but I rather incline to the Judgment of *Aquinas*, That humane *Reaſon*, when it has ſtretch'd it ſelf to the uttermoſt, is not at all proportioned to them, but at the beſt only can give ſome weak *adumbrations* of them. 'Twill be honour enough for Reaſon to ſubmit unto Divine Revelation, and to captivate it ſelf to the Authority of God in His Word; and withall to make it appear to the Adverſaries of the Goſpel, that Faith does not oppoſe Reaſon; indeed the way of Faith is a far more compendious way, *longum iter per rationem, breve per fidem*; That which Reaſon would have been ſweating for theſe many years, Faith ſups up the very quinteſſence of it in a moment; God hath choſen this way of Faith, that he may ſtain the pride and glory of Man; that he may confound the wiſdom of the fleſh, and maintain in Man great apprehenſions of Himſelf, of His Divine Revelations, Truth and Goodneſs; and keep the Creature in a continual poſture of dependency upon Himſelf, and humble ſubmiſſion to His own Teſtimony and Authority. *Fourthly*, The Light of Reaſon is *lumen Aſcendens*, an Aſcendant light: *Reaſon* is ſoon weary with fluttering up and down among the Creatures and periſhing things of this life; this Candle doth but waſte it ſelf to no purpoſe, in ſearching for true happineſs here below; after a diligent ſearch, your own

Reaſon

Reason will tell you, that the *ſummum bonum*, the chiefeſt good, lies not in the riches, honours, pleaſures, of this world, no nor in moral virtues and excellencies; though ſome Men far above others have ſnuffed their Candles with more care and exactneſs, by improving their *intellectuals*, and refining their *morals*, yet at length they ſadly perceiv'd, that when their *Candles* were at the brighteſt they burnt but dimly and blewly, and that for all their ſnuffing they would relapſe again into their former dimneſs and obſcurity. The Improvements of Nature and Reaſon will never make a Man perfectly happy: This Candle of the Lord would flame and aſcend upward towards Heaven, but is much weakened and darkned by luſts and paſſions, ſo that it cannot mount up to God, and attain that glorious end and reward which is the happineſs of Man; Natures eye cannot ſee it, Natures hand cannot reach it, nor is there any natural power or operation proportioned to ſuch a high tranſcendent Object, as the Bleſſed *Face* of God in Glory: And therefore the Nature and Reaſon of Man muſt be advanc'd above it ſelf by a *ſupernaturale Auxilium*, before it can be bleſs'd with ſo great a perfection, as to arrive to the full end of its being; nay God Himſelf (O wonderful Myſtery!) was pleaſed to aſſume the Nature of Man, that He might make it more capable of this perfection, and by a ſtrict Love-knot and union make it partaker of the Divine Nature.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Shewing that the beſt *Heathen* Philoſophers *were* ſenſible *of great* defects *in* Nature *and* Reaſon.

THough the Heathen *Philoſophers* and Moraliſts generally did aſcribe too much to the Light of Nature and Reaſon, yet the wiſeſt of them (after long experience) were ſadly ſenſible, that this Candle at the beſt, after all their ſnuffing, did burn but dim. *Socrates* (than whom there was not a more prudent virtuous man amongſt the *Heathens)* doth ſo far complain of the weakneſs of his *Candle-light, i. e.* his Intellectuals, as that he tells us his *lamp* would ſhew him nothing but his own darkneſs and *ignorance*: This only he *knew*, that he was ignorant and *knew* nothing. Other *Philoſophers* beſides him were deeply ſenſible of, and groaned under theſe great decays and imperfections of natural light and *reaſon:* You may hear them often complaining of a *defluvium pennarum*, that the wings of the Soul flag, and many of the feathers drop away: One will tell you, that his *head* his underſtanding *akes*; another, that his *eye* his reaſon is dimm'd; a *third*, that his Soul trembles with doubts and uncertainties. As you heard *Socrates*, the Maſter and the wiſeſt man in *Greece*, complaining of the languiſhings and faintings of natural light and reaſon; ſo you may ſee *Plato*, his Scholar, ſitting down by the waters of *Lethe*, and weeping becauſe he could not remember his former *notions:* You may

like-

likewiſe hear *Ariſtotle*, another of his Scholars, bewailing his condition, that his *Abraſa tabula* hath ſo few and ſuch imperfect impreſſions upon it, and that his Intellectuals are at ſo low an *ebb*, that the motions of *Euripus* will poſe and *nonplus* him. And as for *Zeno*, *Epictetus*, and other famous Philoſophers, they confeſs ingeniouſly, that they had not the right apprehenſion of things, and that they were intangled with a *ſpurious* and adulterate kind of *reaſon*, inſtead of that which is called right reaſon. If you caſt your Eye upon the moſt *Eagle-eyed* Naturaliſt, you will ſee him puzzled with an *occult quality*; if you take a view of the exacteſt *Moraliſt*, you will find him bewildred, and at a great loſs in his Morals, not being able to attain to true peace and reſt in his Soul by all theſe Virtues. Shall theſe moral Heathens complain of their great defects and behindments, and ſhall Chriſtians pride themſelves in their natural or moral improvements, and ſet up the light and power of Nature and Reaſon, as much or more than the light and power of Grace and Divine Revelation? How unbecoming! how unſutable is this to the glorious Goſpel of Chriſt, which clearly ſets forth the corruption of Nature, the natural man's ſubjection to Sin and Satan, and the Curſe of the Law; and an abſolute neceſſity of the new birth and regeneration! Let not this Candle therefore, which burns but dim, aſpire ſo high, as to make it ſelf equal with the *Sun*: *Salomon* himſelf, who had made many diſcoveries with this *Candle* of the Lord, and had thereby ſearch'd into the ſeveral veins of Knowledge, into the hid Treaſures of Wiſdom, into the depths of State Affairs, and into the bowels and myſteries of Nature, yet after much ſearching, and a diligent improvement of his

his *intellectual* lamp, he could not find the chiefeſt good in any of theſe, or in all of them put together; but as a man ſufficiently wearied and tired out, you may hear him complain, that *all is vanity and vexation of ſpirit*, and that there is no true reſt in any thing under the *Sun*.

CHAP. V.

Of them *that* give *too little to the* light *of* Reaſon.

SOme are ſo ſtrangely prejudic'd againſt *reaſon* without reaſon, that they would have no uſe at all made of it in Religious Concerns, but utterly exclude it out of the Church of God: Now this is an extreme which we ſhould avoid, and pray to be delivered from ſuch unreaſonable *abſurd* men, as will not in the leaſt hearken to *reaſon*, but fill our ears with noiſe and clamour to no purpoſe, 2 *Theſſ.* 3. 2. *Firſt*, Thoſe are to be blamed that cannot endure the name of *reaſon* in Diſcourſes of Religion: If you offer to make a *Syllogiſm*, or a rational Diſcourſe, they will preſently fall fowl upon you, and cry it down as carnal reaſoning: If one man ſpeak or write more reaſon than another, if it croſs ſome mens humours and intereſts, he ſhall be term'd a *Prudentialiſt*, if not a Conjurer or Magician: He muſt needs be a dangerous man, if he have better *Intellectuals*, and more wiſdom and underſtanding than others in matters Civil and Religious. *Secondly*, Such as wholly relye upon dreams and *enthuſiaſms*, are Enemies to Reaſon, and renounce

their

their Intellectuals and Underſtandings: Do they pretend to the Spirit of God! let them know that this Spirit is a ſober wiſe and ſerious Spirit, and doth not deſtroy the uſe of Reaſon, but elevateth and raiſeth up the rational faculties to a higher pitch, than meer Nature can mount up to, in His ſervice. It hath been truly obſerved, both by the *Ancient* Fathers and our Modern Writers, as a characteriſtical difference between the true *prophetical* Spirit and the falſe and counterfeit, that the one leaves men in the free uſe and exerciſe of their *reaſon* and faculties, but the other fills and diſtracts them with pannick fears, tremblings, and conſternations, both of body and mind. *Epiphanius*, and others, diſcovering the folly and madneſs of *Montanus* and his followers, gives this reaſon why they could be no *true* Prophets; becauſe in thoſe that are ſo, there is a great conſiſtency of ſenſe, reaſon, and diſcourſe: The true Prophet (ſay they) had always the free uſe of his reaſon and faculties, and ſpake from the Spirit of God with conſiſtency and coherence of diſcourſe; whereas it was quite otherwiſe with the *Monataniſts*, they were always trembling both in body and mind, and uſed no conſequence of reaſon in diſcourſe; their words had no proper ſenſe, but were all dark, intricate, and obſcure. *Thirdly*, Thoſe alſo are upon this extreme that hold an *Annihilation* or deſtruction of the Faculties of the Soul in the new ſpiritual Birth and Regeneration, as if there were a new will and underſtanding, not only for quality but for ſubſtance, infuſed into us, which is to take away our reaſon and unman us. If there be any ſo abſurd and irrational, as would perſwade us wholly to lay aſide our reaſons, judgments, and underſtandings, in matters of Religion, and not to make uſe of, or ingage any

of

of theſe in our *Inquiries* after things of a ſpiritual and ſupernatural concernment: This is in effect to render us Bruitiſh, and to extinguiſh that Candle which the Lord hath ſet up in our Souls, wherewith we ought to ſearch and try Spirits and Doctrines, being enabled thereunto by the Spirit of God, which reneweth, ſtrengthneth and raiſeth the Rational faculties of Man's Soul, but doth not deſtroy them. *Fourthly*, When Chriſtians are members of a particular Society, and will not be regulated by *Reaſon* in things that are not contrary to the Word of God; but are led more by humour and faction, or by a worldly Intereſt, than by Judgment and Reaſon; when young men deſpiſe the grave reaſons of thoſe that are antient, and experienced in the ways of God; and when private Chriſtians will not be ſwayed by the weighty reaſons of their Paſtors and Church-Officers as to Civil circumſtances, order and decency, in reference to the Worſhip of God; but are fierce and heady, and diſorderly in their actions and proceedings, and will give no reaſon thereof, but their own Will and Humor; Truly this is irrational, and tends to confuſion; this is not to act like ſober underſtanding Chriſtians, nor will it bring Honour to, but Contempt upon the ways and Worſhip of God. And as for thoſe perſons, whatever they be that will take upon them to determine Religious or Eccleſiaſtical matters that are in Controverſie, and thereby impoſe upon their Brethren without giving ſufficient grounds and Reaſons of their Judgment and Opinion; what do they do in effect but blindfold us, and bid us lay aſide our Reaſon and Underſtanding, that we may yield implicit obedience to their partial dictates and determinations? No man's Opinion in things of

this nature should signifie any more to us than the Reasons whereby he confirms it, I speak as to *wise* men (saith the Apostle) *Judge ye* what I say, 1 *Cor.* 10. 15. Every Party in Religion (however distinguish'd) when they have gain'd a considerable Reputation amongst men, either for their Piety, or Learning, or Worldly Interest, are too apt to run into these unbrotherly irrational Impositions, which perhaps they have severely Condemned in others. If it be expected from the *Magistrate*, that in these matters he should give a Reason of his Commands and Injunctions, how much more should it be expected from them that have not such Authority, nor are they in such a Publick Capacity to impose upon others!

CHAP. VI.

Of those that ascribe *too much to* Reason.

AS there are some that derogate from, so there are others that magnifie too much, and even Idolize the light and power of Nature and Reason, and so make shipwrack of Faith and the Gospel; when they will have us believe no more in Divine matters than we can Comprehend by our weak depraved Reason; hereupon the proud *Socinians* deny and reject many Articles of the Christian Faith, because (as they conceive) they are contrary to Reason: The Doctrine of *three* Persons in one Essence, of the two Natures in the one Person of Christ; the Satisfaction of Christ, and his meriting Eternal

Eternal life and glory for us; the doctrine of Original Sin, and of Predeſtination, eſpecially God's decree touching Reprobation, are all rejected by them as being contrary to reaſon: What a horrid ſaying was that of a *Socinian* in Forein parts, That if the *Eternal* Godhead and *Satisfaction* of Chriſt were aſſerted in Scripture (as indeed they are) yet he would not *believe* them becauſe they are againſt *reaſon*, that is, againſt his corrupt Reaſon and vain Imagination: And a *late* Writer of our own Nation is ſo bold and daring as to tell us in a *voluminous* Book of his, That in caſe any ſuch aſſurance of the *unchangeableneſs* of God's love (as we maintain according to the Scriptures) were to be *found* or could regularly be deduced from the *Scriptures*, it were a juſt ground to any Intelligent and Conſidering man to queſtion their Authority, and whether they were from God or no. This is plain dealing; the divine Authority of the ſacred Scriptures muſt depend upon their reaſon or opinion; ſo far as they can comprehend by their reaſon the great and glorious Myſteries of the Goſpel to be agreeable to Reaſon, neither above it nor contrary to it, ſo far they will embrace the Goſpel; but if they find it otherwiſe, they are then in a ready poſture to eſteem it no better than a Fable, as that wicked *Pope* ſaid: No marvel indeed if the *Heathen* Philoſophers, eſpecially the *Stoicks*, adore and idolize the ſuppoſed power and excellency of Nature and Reaſon, by their *Rhetorical* Hyperbolical praiſes; when as thoſe that live under the ſun-ſhine of the Goſpel are ſo apt to fall into the ſame Errour, and to attribute that to Nature, which is only due to the Grace and Spirit of God. What doth *Pelagius* and his followers (whereof

there are too many in our days) but take the *Crown* from Chriſt and ſet it upon Natures head, and place the Creature in the Throne of God and grace. A *Learned* man (d) gives us this brief *Character* of *Pelagius*; That he was *Humani Arbitrii decomptor, & divinæ Gratiæ contemptor*; a trimmer of Nature, and a contemner of Grace. All men are born *Pelagians*, Nature is predominant in them, and will not eaſily ſubordinate it ſelf to a principle of Grace or that which is ſupernatural; and therefore this Doctrine ſpreads far and near, as *Bradwardine* complains in his time, *Totus penè mundus poſt* Pelagium *abiit in errorem:* And yet *Pelagius* though he was ſuch an admirer of the power of Nature and Reaſon, did not altogether deny the aſſiſtance of *Grace* in the point of Converſion and Salvation no more than others, who yet at this day aſcribe too much to Nature and Reaſon: For firſt, he acknowledged the *Aſſiſtance* of Grace neceſſary for enlightning the Underſtanding; yea ſecondly, for exciting the Will to determine it ſelf; but thirdly, he would never acknowledge the ſupernatural efficacy of the Grace of God upon the Will of Man, ſo as to give it a new and ſpiritual power and principle, and likewiſe the Acting of that power towards God, who gives us both to will and to do of his *good* pleaſure, *Phil.* 2. 13. This he always bogled at, as being unwilling to Captivate Nature and Reaſon to the efficacious Grace of God in the Goſpel; and ſo under a ſpecious pretence of the aſſiſtance of *Grace* he advanc'd the natural power and reaſon of man, and changed grace into nature; as if there were nothing ſupernatural in the work of Converſion: *Sub laude naturæ latent inimici*

(d) Ger. Voſſius *Hiſtor. Pelag.*

inimici gratiæ. If it be by *Grace* (ſaith the Apoſtle *Rom.* 11. 6.) then it is no more of *work*, otherwiſe *Grace* is no more *grace:* But if it be of *works*, then is it no more *grace*; otherwiſe *work* is no more *work:* Nature and Grace, Reaſon and Faith muſt not be thus mingled and jumbled together; for it is not grace indeed unleſs it be every way *pure* and free Grace. Thoſe that tell us with ignorance and boldneſs enough, That the Improvement of nature and reaſon may merit grace and glory, may as well tell us (if they pleaſe) That a ſmall Candle by its ſhining may merit to be a Star, yea to be a Sun: Nor is nature (as much as it is exalted by ſome men) always conſtant to its own light and profeſſed rules and principles; which evidently appears by the practice of ſome darlings of nature, whilſt they have run into ſome unnatural vices that were the very bluſhes of nature. And if nature cannot tell how to live upon Earth, ſurely it will never be able by any of its own Improvements to climb up to Heaven.

CHAP. VII.

Of the uſe *of humane* Reaſon *in Civil* Government *and affairs.*

ALthough the *wings* of Reaſon be ſo clipt, that ſhe cannot mount up to Heaven, yet ſhe is of excellent uſe in Civil matters and the affairs of this life: Thoſe men that are moſt rational, and abound moſt in moral wiſdom and experience, if withall

they are piouſly and religiouſly affected, (for 'tis Religion that crowns all Moral virtues) are moſt fit to be Law-makers, and to govern and manage affairs under him who is ſupreme Governour and King of *Saints* and Nations: Laws are given to rational Creatures, and are founded in *Intellectuals*; ſuch only as are endued with *reaſon* are capable of Laws and Government: What is a Law but a rational reſtraint and limitation of abſolute liberty? The more reaſon there is in a Law the better it is: Even the law of Nature, that *univerſal* Law which commands all Nations and Creatures is built upon *reaſon*; yea reaſon it ſelf is that fixt and unſhaken Law which is not written in periſhing Paper by the hand or pen of a Creature, nor graven like a dead letter upon decaying Pillars, but written with the point of a Diamond, nay with the finger of God himſelf in the Heart of Man. *Firſt*, Then, thoſe perſons that have moſt *Reaſon* and Judgment, and excel others in moral virtues are beſt able to deviſe and conſtitute Laws for governing the Community, and for the benefit of the Publick; *Lex eſt ordinatio rationis ad bonum commune*, &c. Every law ought to be a rational Conſtitution for advancing the *publick* good. Law-givers ſhould be men of the moſt ſober rational Judgments and of moſt Publick ſpirits, that ſo their laws may be as a ſtaff for the Commonwealth to reſt upon, and not like thorns and briers to pierce it through: *Laws* ſhould be cords of love, not nets and ſnares; and thoſe are the beſt laws which come neareſt the Law of God himſelf, and are participations of that Eternal unerring Law. *Ariſtotle* ſpeaks well and wiſely upon this ſubject; A *Law* (ſaith he, ſpeaking of ſuch as flow from right reaſon)

is

is a pure *Intellect*, a Judgment without *diſordered* affections; 'tis *impartial*, and makes no *fractions*; it cannot be *bribed*, though a Judge may: If you be to take *Phyſick*, then indeed 'tis ill being *determined* by a *Book*, 'tis dangerous taking a printed *Recipe*; in this caſe you had better leave it to the *breaſt* of the *Phyſician*, and to his skill and advice who minds your health and welfare, as being moſt for his gain and credit: But in point of *Juſtice* the caſe is very *different*; here you had better depend upon a *ſtanding rule* than leave it to the *arbitrary* power of a *Judge*, who if left to himſelf is apt to be *ſwayed* and byaſſed by ſeveral *Intereſts* and *Engagements* which may incline him to one more than another: Nay, now that there are fixed Rules and *ſtanding* Laws which we may have recourſe unto, yet there is too much partiality in the interpretation and application of them; how much more would it be ſo, if there were no fixed Rule at all? Wiſe men and not fools, grave antient diſcreet perſons, and not young *green-heads* that have little underſtanding or experience are moſt fit to make Laws for others: When young men make Laws for old men, and not old men for young men, this is exceeding abſurd and prepoſterous. A wiſe man ruleth himſelf according to *Reaſon* in all his actions, and therefore is not much moved or diſcompoſed by ſudden changes, for reaſon is always peaceable and quiet; *Nulla placidior quies niſi quam ratio compoſuit*, No reſt more pleaſing than that which reaſon hath ſetled: But the fool ſuffereth himſelf to be tranſported and carried to and fro by his own paſſion and partiality, and is never at reſt, but always changing, mending, readviſing, fickle and inconſtant in his reſolutions and actions; and there-

fore a very unfit man to be a *Law-maker*. *Secondly* As the moſt rational men, who are guided by reaſon and not by paſſion, are moſt fit to make Laws, ſo they are of beſt capacity to exerciſe and adminiſter the Laws and Government: It cannot ſink into my mind after ſerious conſideration, that perſons of weak parts, and of little or no experience (if judged to be godly) are more fit to manage matters of Civil government than others that are far more rational and prudent, who yet are not thought to be truly godly, but only morally virtuous and free from open prophaneneſs: I am far from approving of this *State-hereſie*; eſpecially conſidering how partial even godly men as we look upon them, are in their judgments and affections, and how much they are divided into Factions and Parties, having a great deal of tenderneſs and charity towards thoſe of their own Opinion, but very little towards others; that will not cry up and cry down thoſe perſons and things which are either much admired or contemned by themſelves; whereas a juſt, rational, moral man will be upright and impartial in the adminiſtration of Government and in ways of Juſtice, and will do to others as he would be done unto himſelf; which as it is agreeable to the Law of God, ſo it accords with the rule of Reaſon and the law of Nature; the radical Principles and Maxims of which law are ſuch as theſe, *Bonum eſt appetendum, malum eſt fugiendum*; *Beatitudo eſt quærenda*; *Quod tibi fieri non vis alteri ne feceris*. It was obſerved of *Ariſtides* a Heathen, but yet a moral juſt wiſe man, that it was as eaſie to turn the Sun out of its courſe, as him from doing Juſtice. And *Solon* the wiſe Legiſlator being asked what *City* he thought to be beſt

beſt govern'd, anſwered, That *City* where ſuch as *receive* no wrong, do as earneſtly *defend others* to whom *wrong* is *offered*, as if wrong were *offered* to themſelves. Certainly it is a great priviledge to be governed by rational wiſe perſons, and not by fools and Children. How much *better* is *wiſdom* (ſaith *Salomon*) than *Gold*, and *underſtanding* than *Silver*, *Prov.* 16. 16. Wiſdom is *better* than *ſtrength* or *weapons* of War: The *words* of *wiſe men* are heard *in quiet* more than the *cry* of him that *ruleth* among fools, *Eccleſ.* 9. 16, 17, 18. Where *wiſdom* is (ſaith the Philoſopher) it *meaſureth* all things by the *rule* of *reaſon*, and will do nothing but that which is honeſt and good; and ſuch a prudent rational perſon as can rule and *govern* his own *ſpirit*, is much better than he that *taketh* a *City*, and is moſt fit to *govern* others, *Prov.* 16.32. This virtue and endowment of Moral prudence is of ſuch weight and neceſſity, that alone and of it ſelf it can do much, and without it in matters of Government ſtrength and riches ſignifie little or nothing; ſtrength void of *counſel* falleth to ruine, even of it ſelf: One wiſe head, and much more many wiſe heads (as ſhould be in a *Senate* or Parliament) overcomes the hands of many: And thoſe things that are made crooked by power and force mis-employed, are rectified and made ſtraight by *reaſon* and Counſel, rightly weighing the diſpoſition of the People, and what is *practicable* as to time, place, perſons; and other circumſtances. *Noſcenda* natura *vulgi eſt* (ſaith *Seneca*) *& quibus modis* temperantur *habeatur*; The nature and *diſpoſition* of the people is to be *prudently* obſerved, and by what means they may be *temperately* ruled, otherwiſe there can be no rational *conſiſtency* of

of Government. The wiſeſt men that ever treated of Civil Governments, have taught us that a *State* or City where moral virtue and prudence is baniſhed, and vice and prophaneneſs encouraged, cannot long continue and proſper; and that it is much better, and more rational to gain the love and good will of the People by making wholeſom Laws, and by the exerciſe of wiſdom and clemency, which uſually confirmeth and aſſureth the State, than to keep them in awe by rigour and ſeverity: Although in ſome Caſes and at ſome times there is more need of ſeverity, (whereof the moſt rational experienced perſons are beſt able to judge) *Firmiſſimum id* Imperium, *quo obedientes gaudent*, (ſaith the wiſe *Hiſtorian* [e]) That *Empire* is moſt firm where the Subjects ſo obey, as that they *rejoyce*. Nor muſt we judge of the *reaſon* and wiſdom of Counſels, or of the ſufficiency and capacity of Perſons by Succeſs and *Events*, which oftentimes fall out alike to wiſe men and fools, nay, the latter ſometimes have more ſucceſs in their heady unadviſed Enterprizes, than the former in their diſcreet and prudent *Counſels*. (*Eccl.* 9. 2.) And therefore it was a *wiſe* Anſwer that was given to ſome perſons that marvelled and were aſtoniſh'd at the ill ſucceſs of their Buſineſs, conſidering with how wiſe and *mature* deliberation it was undertaken; that they were *Maſters* of their *deliberations*, but not of the *ſucceſs* of their *affairs*, for that was in the power of the *Supreme* Cauſe and Being, which ſeems to *ſport* it ſelf with all our faireſt Deſignments and Counſels, overthrowing in a moment that which hath been for a long time projected and deliberated, and in outward appearance ſtrongly fortified as to future Events.

(e) Tit. Liv. *Dec.*

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

Of the Exerciſe of Reaſon *and humane* Prudence *in Church* matters.

LEt it be granted that the *Eſſentials* of Worſhip and Church Government are *Jure divino*, and may be evinc'd and demonſtrated from Scripture, yet doubtleſs as to the outward Exerciſe and Adminiſtration thereof, the Light of *Reaſon* and Moral Prudence is of excellent uſe; if we will ſo manage matters in the Church of God as to honour the Chriſtian *Religion*, and derive a due Reverence thereunto: And indeed whatever the ſeveral *Parties* pretend, (as they are now diſtinguiſh'd by ſeveral names, which is a thing to be much lamented) yet all of them make uſe of Reaſon and humane Prudence in one kind or other in their ſeveral Church Adminiſtrations, though ſome more and others leſs, according to their capacities. The Light of Nature and Reaſon, if attended to and improved by thoſe that are members of Churches and Chriſtian *Societies*, will teach them to walk orderly, and to maintain Peace and Unity, yea in many reſpects it will be exceeding helpful unto them. *Firſt*, Reaſon it ſelf will ſuggeſt unto us, (f) That there muſt be a *Society* and joining together for the viſible Worſhip of God: *Gen.* 4. 26. As the number of Men increas'd, ſo they grew into *Societies* that they might more conveniently worſhip the Lord; all men generally

(f) *Dr.* Stillingfleet *his* Irenicum.

generally agreeing in ſome kind of Worſhip, though differing as to the manner and object of it. The very *Heathens* had this from the Light and Law of Nature, that they look'd on a peculiar diſtinct Society as neceſſary for the Worſhip and Honour of that Deity which they ſerved: They did not only conſider themſelves in a private perſonal relation and capacity, but as members of a *Society*, engaged to attend on the Worſhip of God in that *Society:* And indeed Man is a ſociable creature, who loves to joyn and aſſociate himſelf with thoſe of his own kind; if he had all other Comforts of life, and wanted Society, he would think himſelf miſerable: This *ſociableneſs* of Man's nature is much improved by Religion, which is that ſtrong ligament that knits and joyns Societies together, and without which no Commonwealth can long ſubſiſt. *Reaſon* and Experience tells us that Religion hath had and ſtill hath a very great Influence upon all Societies and Governments; and from the Light of *Reaſon* we may gather that the more God is worſhipped in Societies, the greater honour redounds unto Him, and certainly we ſhould worſhip God in ſuch a way as makes moſt for His honour and glory. *Secondly*, Reaſon will alſo tell us, that Societies for the Worſhip of God ſhould be maintain'd and govern'd in the moſt convenient manner, ſo as Truth, and Peace, and Order may be preſerved: There muſt be ſome *diſtinction* of perſons, and a ſuperiority of Power and Order placed in ſome perſons over others in a Society, or elſe it cannot long ſubſiſt or be maintain'd in peace. Though the *form* of Church Government, and the manner of Inveſting Church Governors in and with their Authority be not determined by the Light of *Reaſon* and

and Law of Nature, yet that there ſhould be a governing Power in a Society for the preſervation of it, is a *dictate* of the Law of Nature; if all be *Rulers* then every man is *ſui juris* and none will obey, and ſo there can be no Society, no Order, no Government; foraſmuch as there is no *ſubordination*, no ſuperiority nor inferiority, all being equals. In all Societies, Civil, Military, Eccleſiaſtical, yea in Families which are the ſmalleſt Societies, there are Governours and governed, Rulers and ruled; where every one is a Governour there can be no Government, and where every one is a Ruler there can be no Order, but Confuſion; and therefore in every Society that is regulated by *Reaſon*, as there are ſome to rule, ſo there are others to obey: And thus it is in Religious Societies, for God is the God of *Order*, and not of *Confuſion* in his Churches. Are all *Apoſtles*, are all *Prophets*, are all *Teachers*, are all *Governours!* If the whole Body were an *Eye*, where were the *hearing!* if the whole were *hearing*, where were the *ſmelling!* But God hath ſet the ſeveral *members* every one in their *places* in the *Body* or Society, even as it pleaſed him. 1 *Cor.* 12. 17, 18, 29. 1 *Cor.* 14. 33. *Thirdly*, The Light of Reaſon will alſo convince us, That the perſons employed in the immediate Service and Worſhip of God (who adminiſter Holy things to us, and are entruſted with the power of *Office* for governing the Society) ſhould have reſpect and reverence, yea and *maintenance* too rendered unto them by the members of the Society anſwerable to the nature of their Employment: This has been generally practiſed in all Nations and Countries where there has beeen any appearance of the face of Religion; and may it not be feared, that even the

the *Turks* and Heathens (many of which do exceedingly *reverence* and honour thoſe that adminiſter their religious Rites and Service) will riſe up in judgment againſt many forward Profeſſors of the Goſpel, who do on the other ſide as much *contemn* and deſpiſe their Miniſters, affording them neither countenance nor maintenance; which is quite contrary to the Light of Nature and *Reaſon*, whilſt they pretend to the Light of the Goſpel and *ſupernatural* Revelation: The Apoſtle plainly ſhews even by Arguments taken from the Light of Nature, 1 *Cor.* 9. 7. that the Miniſters of the Goſpel who *labour* in the Lord's Vineyard ſhould have due maintenance and encouragement. As Tyranny in Church *Officers* is dangerous and deſtructive on the one hand, ſwallowing up the liberties of Chriſtian Societies, ſo a Contemptible mendicant Miniſtry, ſuch a Miniſtry as is enſlaved to the *dictates* and humours of the People is as dangerous and deſtructive (if not more dangerous and deſtructive) to Religion on the other hand, as our own reaſon and daily experience will tell us. *Fourthly*, Societies for the ſolemn Worſhip of God, being agreeable to the Light of Nature and Reaſon, as well as to the Holy Scriptures, we may hence gather that every Chriſtian is under an Obligation to joyn himſelf to one *Church-ſociety* or other where he may *ſolemnly* worſhip God according to his Judgment and Conſcience, and not walk at random without rule and order; for as he ſhould worſhip God in ſecret, ſo being a member or part of the Church of God which is a Body *politick*, he ought to manifeſt it by being viſibly united to other parts of the Body: And although *Churches* are much divided and corrupted at this day, yet ſeeing there are many true Churches

of

of Chriſt, and ſome of them purer and more agreeable to his own Judgment than others, he is bound by the Ordinance of God (and this the very light of Nature and Reaſon will alſo ſuggeſt unto him) to joyn and adhere to that Society which he judgeth to be moſt pure and moſt agreeable to the Rule of Scripture and his own profeſſed Principles. All Nations throughout the World that acknowledge a *Deity* are convinc'd even by the light of Nature that it is their duty to aſſociate themſelves with others for the participation of thoſe Religious Rites and Ordinances that belong to the Worſhip of that Deity which they acknowledge. *Fifthly*, It is an irrational abſurd thing, and argues an Impoſing ſpirit (as any rational impartial man may eaſily judge) to make that to be a ground and condition of Church *Communion* which the moſt holy wiſe God hath not required in His Word: What, will men be wiſer than God? will they lay Burthens on the Conſciences of their Fellow-Chriſtians, where God hath left them free? As this practice of theirs oppoſeth the Word of God and the Chriſtian moderation of the pureſt Primitive Church, ſo it riſeth up with a high hand againſt the Light of *Reaſon*, which would have us do no more to others in things of this nature, than we would have them do unto us: What reaſon can be given why Chriſtians now ſhould not ſtand upon the ſame terms and grounds of Church Communion which they did in the times of Chriſt and His Apoſtles! Or that they ſhould be bound up to more than Chriſt hath obliged them unto! Or that any ſhould be excluded from *Church* Communion who have Communion with Chriſt, and ſhall be admitted into His heavenly Kingdom! Surely this is unreaſonable: The queſtion is not whether the

the things commanded and required be lawful or no, nor whether *Indifferencies* may be determin'd by the Church, or the *Magistrate:* But whether those persons do in a rational way consult the Advancement of the *Protestant* Cause, the Churches Peace and Unity, and the benefit of Brotherly Communion, who suspend it upon such things as God hath not made the Ground of Church-Communion, and is contrary to the Example and Practice of Christ and His Apostles, for they would lay no other *Burthen* upon the Churches besides the things that were necessary, *Acts* 15. 29. Doubtless the main Inlet of those Divisions and Confusions that have been and are yet in the Christian World, was and is by adding other *Conditions* of Christian Communion than Christ hath appointed: Hereof none are more guilty (though none more apt to accuse and condem others) than the *Schismatical* Church of *Rome*, who by adding to the Rule of Faith and to the true Grounds of Church Communion, hath caused no small Trouble to the Churches of Christ; which come to be establish'd in Peace, not by rigorous *Impositions*, but by mutual forbearance and condescention in such Indifferencies as are not determined in Scripture: And this our own *reason* will tell us, that the Unity and Peace of the Church lies not so much in a bare Uniformity in Opinion and Practice touching these things, as in an unity of Love and Affection, and a prudent forbearance and moderation; for which Christian moderation the *Primitive* Church is much commended, and herein we should imitate her: She judged it (saith the *Ecclesiastical Historian* [g]) and that *very justly*, a foolish and *frivolous thing*, for *those* that *agree* in the *weighty matters*

(g) Sozom. *Hist. Eccles. l.7. cap.* 19.

matters of Religion *to ſeparate from one anothers Communion* for the *ſake* of ſome petty *Cuſtoms* and *Obſervations*: For *Churches* agreeing in the ſame *Faith* often differ in their *Rites* and *Cuſtoms*: And withall he tells us of many *Cities* and *Villages* in *Egypt*, not only differing from the *Cuſtoms* of the *famous* Church of *Alexandria*, but from all other Churches beſides in their *publick* Aſſemblies on the *Evenings* of the *Sabbath*, and receiving the *Euchariſt* after Dinner: And thus, they freely allowed liberty unto, and did not rigorouſly Impoſe upon diſſenters in matters of this nature; carrying themſelves towards them with much moderation and ſweetneſs of deportment, without making ſuch obſervances in Worſhip (as were diſputable and not clearly determined in Scripture) the Indiſpenſable Conditions of Communion with a particular Church: And what reaſon can be alledged for ſuch Injunctions? Is not the Rule of Church Communion plainly laid down and fix'd by Chriſt himſelf to the things which he hath Commanded? *Matth.* 28. 19, 20. After this, when ſome perſons would have impos'd the *Moſaical* Rites and Ceremonies (for which there was yet more Ground than for our Impoſitions) the Apoſtle bids the Churches *ſtand faſt* in their *liberty*, ſo as not to be the *ſervants* of men in theſe things; yea and after the Apoſtles days, when *Victor* Biſhop of *Rome* would have impoſed on other Churches in the point of obſerving *Eaſter*, he was worthily condemned by *Irenæus* and others. If it be lawful for any perſons or Churches to aſſign *unſcriptural* conditions of their Communion, will it not hence follow, That Chriſt hath fixed no certain Rule of Communion among Chriſtians, which doubtleſs he hath done, as appears plainly in the Scriptures?

And if ſuch perſons or Churches may deviſe and aſſign new Rules and *Conditions* of Church Communion, where ſhall the bounds and limits be ſet? *Reaſon* it ſelf will tell us, that there will be no end, no bottom of it; ſome men eſpecially being witty to deviſe a multitude of Ceremonies and outward Obſervances, whereof *Auguſtine* himſelf complained in his days, and which ſufficiently appears in the Church of *Rome* in our days. *Sixthly*, The Light of Nature and *Reaſon* will alſo inform us that ſuch as are admitted into a Church Society, ſhould freely conſent to be governed by the Laws and Rules of it: Nor can thoſe be look'd upon rationally as *ſtated* members of a Society that will not ſubmit to the Rules of the Society as they were conſtituted at the time of their entrance into it; if they will partake of the Priviledges of a Society, 'tis but reaſonable that they ſhould ſubmit to the Laws of it, and perform thoſe Duties that are incumbent upon them as members of it; otherwiſe they do but weaken and not ſtrengthen the Society whereof they are members: Yea it is highly rational that in a well ordered Society every offendor ſhould give an account of his Actions to the Governors of it, and ſubmit to the Cenſures inflicted upon him by them, that ſo the Society may be preſerved in peace and order, and the Laws and Ordinances of it adminiſtred with authority and ſucceſs: And when a Chriſtian is actually joyned in Church Society with others he ſhould not upon *ſlight* grounds break off Communion, but ſhould continue ſtill with them till his Communion become ſinful; for there is nothing in Scripture or Reaſon that can juſtifie a total ſeparation from ſuch a *Society* but the unlawfulneſs and ſinfulneſs of continuing any

any longer in it: Though there be many *defects* in that Society (as there are in all the viſible Churches of Chriſt) yet if there be nothing Impoſed upon him that is ſinful, but he may partake of the Ordinances of Chriſt without Sin, he ought not to withdraw from ſuch a Society. A Chriſtian may eaſily diſcern by the light of *reaſon*, That if Church-members will withdraw upon every ſlight occaſion, and make themſelves Judges of the Grounds of their withdrawing, there will be no end of ſeparation; and withal this practice which is ſo common will at length be ruinous and deſtructive to the peace and order of every Church Society: Indeed the Caſe is otherwiſe where a Church is guilty of great Corruptions both in Doctrine and Practice which it awoweth and profeſſeth, and alſo requireth the owning them as neceſſary conditions of Communion with her; in ſuch a caſe there ought to be a withdrawing from the Communion of that Church in which we cannot continue without Sin; this is no *Schiſm*, but rather the Duty of every Chriſtian, who ought to abſtain from that Communion by which he will contract guilt upon his own Soul: The departure therefore of a Chriſtian from a Church is either lawful or ſchiſmatical, according to the reaſons and grounds of it, which ought to be wiſely and diligently inquired into before it be undertaken. So long as we may communicate with a true Church of Chriſt of which we are ſtated members without Sin (though there be ſome Corruptions tolerated but not impoſed by her) we ſhould not utterly forſake her Communion, but endeavour to preſerve the Society, and in a ſober rational way to reform thoſe Corruptions and Abuſes according to our Places and Callings. *Seventhly*, The Law of

Nature and Reaſon dictates to us, That all things in a Religious Society ſhould be adminiſtred with much ſeriouſneſs and gravity, and not in a ſlight ſuperficial manner, which cauſeth much lightneſs and vanity of Spirit in the members of it; whereas the *Governors* and Miniſters of ſuch Societies ſhould ſo manage the Affairs thereof that the Ordinances and ways of God may be rendered awful and *majeſtical*, and not vile and contemptible in the Eyes of the People by their means: God will be *reverenced* in Church Aſſemblies, where nothing ſhould be done or practiſed but what becomes the Majeſty of God and his Holy Worſhip: If there be much diſorder and confuſion (neither Miniſters nor People duly keeping their places in a Church Society) this muſt needs be diſpleaſing unto God, as being very unſuitable to the nature of his Church and Worſhip, which requires the greateſt order and ſeriouſneſs: Here certainly (if if in any Aſſembly) all things ſhould be done decently and in order; nor ſhould ſcandalous vicious perſons be admitted to the participation of the Sacred Myſteries of Chriſt in his Churches; for if theſe things be promiſcuouſly uſed and made common to good and bad, they will in a rational way loſe their luſtre and become contemptible; and ſo they are at this day in thoſe Church Societies where no Diſcipline at all is exerciſed: What's the reaſon that Religion flouriſhed ſo much, and that there was ſo great a veneration of the Myſteries of Chriſt in the Primitive times, but becauſe they uſed much ſtrictneſs and Chriſtian prudence in their admiſſion of Church-members, as is fully deſcribed by *Origen* and others, who tell us that they inquired into the *Converſations* of the People, to diſcover their *ſeriouſneſs* in the profeſſion

profeſſion of *Chriſtianity*, and requir'd of them true repentance and reformation of life before they were admitted to the participation of the *Sacred* Myſteries. And *Juſtin Martyr* in his *Apology*, ſpeaking of the Celebration of the *Lords* Supper, tells us, That there was *required* of *thoſe perſons* that were *admitted* to the *Lords Supper*, a profeſſion of *Faith* in the Truths of the *Goſpel*, and a Life *anſwerable* thereunto, without which it was not *lawful* for them to *participate* at the *Lord's Table*. This cauſeth the Myſteries of God to be *reverenced*; but where there is a promiſcuous Admiſſion and Adminiſtration, and none excluded that will offer themſelves, this will in a ſhort time take away that *Majeſty* and Authority that ſhould accompany ſuch Holy *Adminiſtrations* in Church-Aſſemblies. *Eighthly*, The Light of Nature and Reaſon will tell us that there muſt be a way or means to determine and decide Controverſies and differences ariſing in ſuch a *Society*, which immediately tend to the breaking the Peace and Unity thereof, otherwiſe there would not be ſufficient proviſion made for the maintenance and preſervation of the *Society*: Now this muſt in reaſon be ſuppoſed in all Societies, That when they are firſt entred into, it muſt be upon ſuch terms as may be ſufficient to maintain and keep up thoſe Societies in peace and order: The Body of Man is furniſh'd by Nature not only with a receptive and concoctive faculty of what tends to its nouriſhment, but with an *expulſive* faculty of what would tend to the ruine of it: Thus it is alſo with Civil Societies, they have not only ways to ſtrengthen them, but likewiſe a power to expel thoſe noxious humours and qualities which tend to their diſſolution; and doubtleſs the Church of Chriſt

which is a Religious Society, is alſo endowed with a power to maintain it ſelf in Peace and Purity, which cannot be without ſome way or other to decide Controverſies and remove Scandals: Now this is agreeable to the light of Nature and Reaſon, when ſuch differences ariſe in the *Society*, either that the leſſer number ſhould acquieſce in the determination of the greater, for *Pars major jus habet univerſitatis*, The greater part hath the power of the whole; or elſe (which indeed is founded upon the Law of Nature) there muſt be a *ſubordination* of powers in Congregations, and a right of Appeal granted to an injured perſon, from the lower and ſubordinate Power to the higher and ſuperiour: And in order to a redreſs of wrongs and ending Controverſies, our *Reaſon* will tell us that Appeals muſt not be infinite, but there muſt be ſome Power or other from whence there ſhall be no *appeal*: And truly it is againſt the natural reaſon and right of every man, for any particular *Society* (under what denomination ſoever) ſo to ingroſs all Eccleſiaſtical power into their own hands, that no liberty of *appeals* for redreſs can be made from them; This is to uſurp upon and invade the Civil and Religious Rights of Chriſtians; for it leaves men under a cauſeleſs Cenſure without any Authorative vindication of them from it: And it is not much better in this Caſe, and more agreeable to *Reaſon*, to have matters in controverſie (either as to Doctrine or Practice) judiciouſly debated and determined in a grave pious Aſſembly or *Synod*, than by two or three men who perhaps by their parts or Popular intereſt, without any ſufficient ground from Scripture and Reaſon, can eaſily ſway thoſe Societies or Congregations that are of their particular Opinion,

and

and ſo be it right or wrong, the ſuppoſed Offendor muſt be determined by it? Shall it be thought *rational* and fit that every particular Society (though conſiſting but of a few perſons) ſhall have power over its own members to determine Controverſies ariſing between them: But yet if one or many of theſe particular Societies ſhall erre and go aſtray there ſhall be no *Authorative* power left for deciding what ſhall be done in this Caſe! Surely if Chriſt (who is the wiſe Governor of His Church) hath made ſufficient proviſion for the Caſes of particular perſons, he hath alſo made ſufficient proviſion (in a rational way) for the Caſes of particular Societies.

Thus we have briefly ſhewed what uſe may be made of the Light of Reaſon both in Civil and Eccleſiaſtical Societies; we ſhall now briefly declare how it may be proved by *Reaſon*, That there is a God or *ſupreme* Being, That the Soul of Man is *Immortal*, That the Chriſtian *Religion* is the only true *Religion*, and That the *Scriptures* are the Word of God; which Points you may find proved at large by *Reaſon*, in the Learned Books of *Leſſius*, *Morney*, *Grotius*, and Sir *Charles Woſeley*, a Gentleman, ſo well qualified and employed, that I could heartily wiſh that our *Engliſh* Gentry would Imitate him.

CHAP. IX.

The light *of* Reaſon *proves that there* is a God.

THere is no Nation ſo Barbarous (ſaith the Heathen *Orator* [h]) no people ſo *ſavage*, in whom there reſteth not this *perſwaſion*, That there is a God. Even thoſe Nations which in other reſpects ſeem very little to differ from bruit Beaſts, yet keep up and maintain a kind of Religion and Worſhip, and have ſome ſenſe of the Eternal Godhead impreſs'd upon their Hearts: Yea *Idolatry* it ſelf is a ſubſtantial proof of this perſwaſion, for how willingly doth Man abaſe himſelf to honour other Creatures above himſelf, when he will rather worſhip a Block, or a Stone, than to have no God at all? Hence it appears that this imprinted perſwaſion of the *Godhead* is of great force, and impoſſible to be quite obliterated and razed out of the mind of Man. To come to the knowledge of an Eternal *Deity* there are two ways, *namely*, by Faith and by *Reaſon*; Faith indeed is the much better and nearer way, for our Reaſon is much weakned and depraved, and God Himſelf (who is the ſupreme Being) is infinitely above our *Reaſon*. No man can make a perfect demonſtration by his Reaſon in natural things, he cannot fully demonſtrate that his Father is his Father, or that he is his Son; ſo that in theſe and the like things there is a neceſſity of ſome faith or belief: If a man tell

(*h*) Cicero *de Natura Deorum.*

tell you that he hath ſeen ſuch or ſuch a place, he can make no *demonſtrative* reaſon of it, for the circumſtances are not capable of *demonſtration*. In this Caſe there muſt be belief, and much more in Religious and Divine matters. Howbeit the Light of Reaſon ſo far as it reacheth, (for it is but an inferiour derivative Light, like the light of the Moon and Stars) will prove unto us that there is a God or ſupreme Being. The Creatures afford Arguments, and our Reaſon gathers by the force of thoſe Arguments that there is a God. *Firſt*, It may be clearly proved and made evident to our *reaſon* by the Frame of this great Univerſe, even thoſe things which the Eye ſeeth and the Ear heareth. *Rom.* 1. 20. Suppoſe a man forty years old who had never ſeen the beauty of this World before, ſhould now behold it, would not the ſight thereof make him wonder, and inquire after the maker and contriver of it, and force him to conclude, that Man being not able to perform ſuch a great and glorious work, it muſt needs be effected by one that is infinitely wiſer and better, and more able than Man! And who ſhould that be, but God Himſelf! Who can cauſe ſuch a conſent and agreement amongſt the Creatures ſo different and contrary one to another, hot and cold, moiſt and dry, but this wiſe and ſovereign Commander! As in a Muſical Inſtrument, on which are twenty diſſonant ſtrings, whence comes the Harmony, but from ſome excellent skilful Muſician that had the tuning of it? Whence comes the fitting and compoſing of one thing to another but from this wiſe God? As we ſay he is an Artiſt that fits the Wheels of a Watch one to another, and 'tis the skill of a Joyner or Smith which makes curious Tools and Works, one fitted

fitted to another, the ſheath to the knife, and the ſcabberd to the ſword. Whence comes the dependance of the Creatures one upon another, and their mutual help and aſſiſtance one of another but from God! Beaſts nouriſh Men, the Graſs nouriſheth them, and the Influence or Dew of Heaven maketh the Graſs to grow, and all from God. *Hoſ.* 2. 21. Theſe things can no more come to paſs by accident, than a multitude of Letters caſt together by chance can without the Art of man make a Poem or Hiſtory; and therefore they direct us even by the light of *reaſon* to a ſupreme Providence. *Secondly*, It is proved by the Original of all things; whence is this Original but of God? As for Man, he muſt needs be made by God, for the Father that begets knows not the making of him, the Mother that conceives knows it not, nor yet the Formative virtue whereby all is faſhioned; whereas there is no work of Art but it is known by the Artificer: And if Man himſelf have his beginning of God, then much more other things, which are made for Man; nor can they have their being from themſelves, for then they ſhould be gods, it being an inſeparable property of God to have His being from Himſelf: Beſides, if theſe things had no beginning, why are there no Monuments of more antient time concerning them, the antient'ſt humane Writers not reaching above four thouſand years? *Reaſon* as well as Scripture will tell us that the firſt Creature was made of nothing; for otherwiſe it could not be ſubject to change and alteration: All Creatures are finite, compounded, imperfect, unable to make or ſuſtain themſelves; no Creature can be the cauſe of it ſelf, for then it ſhould be both the cauſe and the effect, both before and after

after it ſelf; and therefore of neceſſity there muſt be a firſt *ſupreme Cauſe* in power infinite, moſt perfect in and of it ſelf, which gives being and continuance unto all things. Amongſt things created we may obſerve a *ſeries* of Cauſes, and an Order in the things themſelves; but *order* is from one *firſt*, and leads us unto one *firſt Cauſe*. We may further add that all things, even things without life, ſenſe and reaſon, which cannot move voluntarily or intend an end, are directed *orderly* to an end; and therefore there is one good, wiſe, chief Director of all things, which is God: And indeed the greatneſs, perfection, multitude, variety and concord of things exiſting, the form, and order, and continual ſuſtentation of the World, and the Creatures therein, do plainly ſhew to an Eye of *Reaſon* that all things depend upon ſome one wiſe and perfect Good, from whom they have their Being and Preſervation. *Thirdly*, The Reaſon of the *Philoſophers* is manifeſt to prove that there is a God, a *firſt* Mover or firſt Cauſe of All; for if this were not ſo, then there ſhould be before every mover another mover, and ſo *in infinitum*: And if the Cauſes were infinite, they ſhould either have infinite motion, and ſo infinite time, or elſe infinite things ſhould move infinite time, both which were abſurd: Seeing alſo the inferiour thing moved doth not move without a ſuperiour mover, if there were not a ſupreme and firſt Mover of all there would not be at all any effect or motion of theſe inferiour things. *Pythagoras* ſaith that there muſt needs be an *infinite power*, or elſe our *Reaſon* ſhould exceed the Maker thereof; for what finite thing ſoever there is we can comprehend it; and if the power be infinite, the ſubject wherein the power is muſt needs

needs be infinite, and that is God. *Fourthly*, It appears that there is a God by the diſtinction of *good* and *evil*, which takes place amongſt all ſorts of men, not only the godly but the wicked; for thoſe that are evil and wicked would ſeem to be good, and though they be evil and blame-worthy in themſelves, yet will they rebuke evil in others: Now this is really to diſtinguiſh between *good* and *evil*; and there muſt be ſome ground of this *diſtinction*, which cannot be from man himſelf, for then it would follow that every thing at man's appointment ſhould be good or evil; and therefore the ground of this diſtinction muſt be from a higher nature, and that is God. *Fifthly*, God hath ſhewed forth His Eternal Power and Deity even in the view of the World, and to an Eye of ſenſe and *reaſon*, by Signs and Wonders and by divers Miracles: Now what are Miracles but God's viſible works extraordinarily wrought, not only above the ordinary courſe of Nature, but ſimply above the power of Nature, either in reſpect of the work it ſelf or the manner of doing it; which miraculous effects do evince that there is an Infinite glorious Power, that is above all things, and doth over-rule all things; for every principal and primary Cauſe is more excellent than the effect thereof. *Sixthly*, That there is a God and ſupreme Being is evident to *Reaſon* by that gracious, wiſe and plentiful Proviſion which is made for all the Creatures in the World. A little Family cannot be well ordered but by a provident Houſholder, much leſs a Town or Commonwealth; and leaſt of all the Univerſe or whole World, wherein are millions of men and other creatures to be daily fed, ſuſtained and governed, which cannot be done and performed but by

by an infinite wiſe God, who in his ſingular Providence doth ſo order and govern the Creatures, that the weak ones go in Herds and Flocks together, and the ſtrong go alone, and thereby are the leſs formidable; hoofs, horns and tusks are for defence, and where theſe are wanting legs can carry the Creatures away, or dens can hide them. O how wiſe and excellent is this God in his government over the whole Creation! What ſhall I ſay of thoſe impreſſions of Skill and Workmanſhip that are upon the Creatures! There is an excellency in Art, but Nature goes far beyond Art, and much more excellent is the God of Nature: If it be a point of skill to ſet a Dial right that ſhall tell the Hours of the Day, what skill hath he who made and guides the Heavens and the Earth and all the Creatures therein! That power and skill which ſhines forth in the Creation doth plainly ſhew that it is of God: And even thoſe wiſe *Naturaliſts* whom Miracles would not move and perſwade, have been aſtoniſhed at the admirable work of God in the leaſt things, and forc'd to acknowledge a divine and ſovereign power: Thus *Pliny* wonders at the *Gnat*, ſo ſmall a creature, yet making ſo great a *buzzing*, and ſo likewiſe he wonders at the *Butterfly*; and *Galen* (as great an *Atheiſt* as he was) when he had prophanely written of the more excellent parts of Man, and came to one of the leaſt and meaneſt, ſtood aſtoniſhed, and was compell'd to acknowledge *God* the Creator. *Seventhly*, The teſtimony of every man's *Conſcience* (which is God's deputy) proves that there is a God. Tell me, thou *Atheiſt*, why the wicked ſhould be troubled in Conſcience? why *Caligula* ſhould be terrified and run under the

Bed

Bed when it thundred, if there be not a God? Let a wicked man do ſome heinous deed in the ſolitary Wilderneſs where none ſeeth him, yet he cannot be quiet, but his Conſcience will whip and torment him, ſo that he will either reveal the fact himſelf in his ſleep or *frenzy*, or at leaſt he will be afraid that the *Birds* of the air (as ſometimes it hath happened) will diſcover it. The Conſcience doth regiſter and bear witneſs of the thoughts, words and actions of all men, either excuſing and comforting them in well doing, againſt the diſgraces, ſlanders and perſcutions of the World; or elſe accuſing and terrifying them for Sin committed in ſecret, which perhaps never did nor ever ſhall come to the knowledge of men in this World. Now this is a manifeſt token and proof (as may be eaſily diſcern'd by the Light of Reaſon) that there is a *ſupreme* Judge who hath given a Law that bindeth the *Conſcience*, and commandeth as well the inward thoughts as the words and actions of all men, and who will call them to a ſtrict account and reckoning. *Eighthly*, It appears that there is a God or ſupreme Being by the Soul of man, which is a ſpiritual immortal ſubſtance (as ſhall be evinc'd by Reaſon in the next Chapter) and is endued with power to underſtand and will: But now the Soul and the power thereof is not of and from it ſelf, but muſt proceed from a higher Cauſe, which is Power, Wiſdom and Underſtanding it ſelf, and this is God. In the Underſtanding of man there are certain *principles* whereby it diſcerneth truth and falſhood, good and evil; this gift man hath not of himſelf nor from himſelf, but it muſt needs ſpring from a ſupreme and moſt wiſe Underſtanding, as an effect from

from its principal Cauſe, which infinitely excels and tranſcends it: Nor is the Mind of man ſatisfied with the knowledge, nor his Will with the poſſeſſion of all things in this Life, but ſtill they ſeek and earneſtly thirſt after ſome higher good. And hence it is evident even to an Eye of *Reaſon*, that there is a ſovereign Truth and chief Good, which being perfectly known and enjoyed will give full ſatisfaction to the Soul of man, which ſeeing it is capable of happineſs, or the chief good, this would be altogether in vain if there were not ſuch a chief good to be poſſeſſed and enjoyed: In our *Immortal* Souls there are principles of infallible and demonſtrative Truth; as to honour and obey our Parents, to do as we would be done unto, to defend our ſelves, to perform our promiſes, *&c.* which Principles hold good in all men more or leſs, unleſs they be horribly prophane and wicked: Amongſt which fundamental Principles this is one and the chiefeſt, That there is a God, and that this God ought to be Worſhipped; and though ſome other of theſe principles may fail in men, yet this never faileth, but they will Worſhip one thing or other as God, unleſs they be downright and deſperate Atheiſts. *Ninthly*, By the continual ſuggeſtions and aſſaults of the evil Spirit, we conclude that there is a *Devil*; and hence we may as certainly conclude that there is a God: Doth not Satan by all means endeavour to extinguiſh the knowledge of God, and the glorious Light of the Goſpel, and to lead men on in ways of Errour and Prophaneneſs, and turn them out of the path of Truth and Holineſs? Now why ſhould the *Devil* thus war againſt God, His Word and Saints? Why ſhould he ſo earneſtly ſeek the diſhonour of God

God and the deſtruction of Men; if there were not a God, a Goſpel, and an Everlaſting Life? Why ſhould he and his wicked Inſtruments with all their helliſh power, malice and policy, labour to extirpate and root out all thoſe that faithfully call upon the Name of God, and are zealous for His Glory, if there were not a God or Supreme Being. *Tenthly*, This great Truth is further made evident (even to an Eye of *Reaſon*) by the Lord's miraculous hiding, preſerving and defending His Church and People from time to time: How wonderfully hath he fruſtrated the Plots and Devices of the Enemies of His Church! How hath His Church increaſed and flouriſhed by the very ſame means which they deſigned and made uſe of to deſtroy Her! How hath God fought from Heaven againſt the Perſecutors of His Children! Such dreadful Judgments did overtake many of them, and ſuch Horror fell upon ſome of them that they were forc'd to forſake their great places and power, and betake themſelves to a ſolitary and private life; which plainly demonſtrates that there is a ſovereign God, who is higher than the higheſt and greater than the greateſt of them. And as for His poor People (whom they perſecuted) the Lord hath armed them with invincible Courage and Fortitude to endure diſgrace, contempt, poverty, impriſonment, death, and the moſt exquiſite Torments that Men and Devils could invent: Yea how hath God ſupported His People under their inward temptations, conflicts, deſertions and troubles of Conſcience! and wonderfully refreſhed them beyond their expectation with ſweet Peace and Conſolation; and by the power, ſtrength and comforts of the Holy Ghoſt hath enabled them to ſing and rejoice in Priſon, and

and even to exult and triumph in the midſt of the flames! Now this divine aſſiſtance, this holy courage, ſtrength and conſolation is a convincing demonſtrative Argument of an Omnipotent *Deity*, eſpecially if we compare the Heavenly courage and comforts of the People of God in their ſufferings, with that fear, faintneſs, amazement, unquietneſs, vexation and deadneſs which ſeiſeth on the wicked when they are under Affliction.

Well then, if we reflect upon what hath been ſaid with reference to Man himſelf and other Creatures, in a way of *Reaſon*, we may be fully convinced that there is an Eternal God: If we look up to the Firmament, the Spheres, the Planets, the Stars, their greatneſs, brightneſs, ſwiftneſs, their order, courſes, motions, and forcible effects; if we behold the Sea, ſo bounded with the Sand by a perpetual decree that it cannot paſs its bounds, though the Waves thereof rage yet can they not prevail, though they roar never ſo much yet can they not paſs their bounds; if we behold the Earth, ſo firm, ſo round, ſo fruitful, ſo great, yet hanging like a *Ball* in the Air, and reſting on a very ſmall *point*: If Man will behold himſelf a little World, in his Body the ſeveral members, with the harmony, ſympathy, functions and uſes thereof; and in his Mind, the inbred principles and ſeminaries of all Arts and Sciences, and the difference of good and evil, of honeſty and diſhoneſty, from which all Laws and Government do ſpring; if we conſider the juſt Puniſhment which commonly followeth evil doers, and the ſting of Conſcience which tormenteth the greateſt Princes, that are out of danger in reſpect of the Laws, as *Alexander* for killing his Friend *Clitus*, and *Nero*

for the murther of his Mother *Agrippina*; If we behold the order, progreſs and end of all Cauſes, the harmony of the whole Univerſe, where there are ſo many contraries, and yet ſuch a harmony amongſt them; *Omnia ab uno, omnia ad unum*; If we conſider the Prediction of things future, the ſtrange Signs and Wonders that have fallen out, with their events, do not all theſe things proclaim aloud unto us, That there is a Supreme Power that wiſely Governs and Over-rules All! Suppoſe a gallant well furniſh'd Ship come ſafe to her Port through all the waves of the Sea, we may well conclude that there was a skilful *Pilot* or Governour within that guided and directed her to the appointed Haven; ſo we beholding this fair Univerſe, this World wherein we live with all its Furniture and Ornaments, and the regular Motions of the ſeveral Creatures, we may rationally conclude that there is a ſupreme Power and Governour thereof which is God. What ſhall I ſay further on this ſubject, (if enough were not already ſaid) methinks this ſhould convince and ſatisfie the Reaſon of any man living (if he have but a ſpark of Reaſon left in him) that all Nations generally in every Age, time and place of the World have acknowledged that there is a God: The *Heathens* themſelves could not endure them that denied a ſupreme divine Power; for this cauſe they put to death that great Philoſopher *Socrates* and others, as ſuppoſing them guilty of this horrid Crime: The *Nations* that have no true knowledge of God do at this day adore Stocks, Stones, brute Beaſts and the baſeſt creatures, rather than they will have no *Deity*, no Religion at all: They are zealous and forward in the Worſhip of their *Idols*, which ſhews, that though

though they acknowledge not the true God, yet they underſtand by the Light of Nature and Reaſon that there is a Supreme Being to whom divine Worſhip is due. And as for ſuch as have even ſtudied and endeavour'd to gratifie the *Devil* to the utmoſt by becoming meer *Atheiſts*, they could never ſo blot this *fundamental* Truth and Principle out of their Conſciences, but that the *Majeſty* of God hath affrighted them and been a terrour to them. So then the univerſality of this perſwaſion in all places proveth that there is an Eternal Deity; in as much as there is no Hiſtory that ſheweth the Manners and and Cuſtoms of any People or Countrey, but it likewiſe ſheweth their Religion, yea all both new and antient Commonwealths had always ſomething or other which they Worſhipped and called in their Language *GOD:* But as touching *Atheiſm*, we can eaſily ſhew, and would take the pains to ſhew it, but that it is already done in the Writings of others, the very time and place, and perſons, when and where, and by whom it was firſt forged; which is a ſufficient *Argument* againſt it, ſuch an Argument as may for ever ſilence the *Atheiſts* of our times, which are as ſo many wild Beaſts, fit to be deſtroyed. 'Tis true, there are ſome wicked wretches that do deſperately harden their own Hearts, and drown themſelves over Head and Ears in *ſenſual* Delights and Pleaſures, but yet if God put His Bridle into their Mouths, which he will do at one time or other, thoſe ſparks and notions which God hath implanted in every man's Soul ſhall break forth and appear, and the darkneſs ſhall not always obſcure the light. In theſe *three* Caſes eſpecially this Principle will ſhew it ſelf, even in thoſe *Atheiſtical* ſpirits that have endeavoured

deavoured to ſuppreſs and extinguiſh it. *First*, When they are ſurrounded and compaſſed about with difficulties and dangers, and muſt needs fall into the hands of their Enemies, unleſs they be preſerved by a Divine power, then though they were never ſo wicked and Atheiſtical before, yet now as the *Tragœdian* obſerves they will fall down on their Knees and pray to a *Deity*, they will cry *peccavi*, and confeſs there is a God indeed. There was a Controverſie betwixt the *Stoicks* and *Peripateticks*; the *Stoicks* held that Man had no Paſſions in him, but the *Peripateticks* were of a contrary opinion: Now it fell out upon a time that when a *Stoick* and a *Peripatetick* were ſailing together in one Ship, there aroſe upon a ſudden a great Tempeſt; the *Stoick* began to look pale, and the *Peripatetick* obſerving it argues thus againſt him, Thou look'ſt pale *Stoick*, and therefore thou art not without Paſſions; he could not free himſelf of fear when he was in danger to be caſt away: So although the *Atheiſt* in his jollity amongſt his Companions belch forth ſometimes that there is no God, yet in his diſtreſs he is enforced to grant a Deity. *Secondly*, This Principle will manifeſt it ſelf even in *Atheiſts* when they are oppreſt with Sickneſs and bodily diſtempers; as there was an Atheiſt call'd *Diogenes*, who being much afflicted with the pain of the Strangury, deteſted his former Opinion. And *Thirdly*, When Old age comes upon them they grow more wiſe and ſober: So we read of one *Cephalus* in *Plato*, who ſaid to *Socrates*, that whilſt he was a young man he never thought that there was any *Styx*, but now in his old age he came to doubt and *queſtion*, What if there be one? This indeed may confute all *Atheiſts*

(as

(as a manifeſt unanſwerable Argument proving that there is a God) becauſe the greateſt Atheiſts that denied him in their lives have acknowledged and approved him in their deaths. *Pherecydes* an *Aſſyrian* being merrily diſpoſed at a Banquet amongſt his Friends, bragg'd how long he had lived and had never done *Sacrifice* to any God; but his end was miſerable, for he was devoured of Lice. *Diagoras* for his damnable Opinion was the cauſe of the deſtruction of the whole Countrey *Meles* in revenge of his Atheiſm: *Lucian* that ſcoffing Atheiſt going to Supper abroad, and having left his Dogs faſt bound as he went, when he returned home (having railed againſt God and His Word) his Dogs broke looſe, fell upon him, and tore him in pieces. *Machiavel* rotted in the Priſon at *Florence*, as the *Italians* write. *Appian* ſcoffing at Religion, and chiefly at *Circumciſion*, had an Ulcer in the ſame part of his Body, as *Joſephus* reporteth. *Julian* the *Apoſtata* being pierced in the Bowels with an Arrow from Heaven, pull'd out the Arrow, and receiving the Blood that came out of the wound, caſt it into the air, ſaying, *Viciſti Galilæe*, and ſo died raging. Many others beſides theſe might be mentioned, who though they acted like *Atheiſts* in their lives, yet juſtified God in their deaths.

CHAP. X.

The Immortality *of the* Soul *of Man proved by* Reaſon.

AS it hath been already demonſtrated by the Light of *Reaſon* that there is an Eternal God or Supreme Being, ſo it may be evinc'd by Reaſon that Man's Soul is Immortal; and indeed the one of theſe depends upon and bears witneſs to the other. The ſpiritualneſs and immortality of the Soul of Man, and that it may and doth ſubſiſt without the Body, is clearly held forth in the Sacred Scriptures; *Gen.* 2. 7. *Eccleſ.* 12. 7. *Matth.* 10. 28. *Luke* 16. 22, 23. and 23. 43. *Rom.* 8. 10, 11. 2 *Cor.* 5, 6, 7, 8. *Phil.* 1. 21, 23. *Heb* 12. 23. *Rev.* 6. 9, 10, 11. into which the Faith of a Chriſtian muſt be *finally* reſolved: But beſides this *Divine* Teſtimony, we have alſo the Teſtimony of the Light of Reaſon.

Firſt then, Let us conſider that the Soul of Man when it underſtands any thing, it *abſtracts* from that which it underſtands all quantity, *quality*, place and time, changing it into a more *Immaterial* and Intelligible nature: As the Stomach when it receives meat, changeth the outward accidents of the nouriſhment into its own nature, whereby it becomes Fleſh and Blood; ſo the *Soul* when it conceives any thing ſeparates it from the *groſs* matter, and conceives it univerſally in the Mind or Underſtanding.

ſtanding. If a Man looks on a Horſe he ſees him of ſuch quantity and colour, and in ſuch a place; but if he conceive him in his mind, then it is an univerſal notion agreeing to all Horſes: Now then as the thing conceived in the mind or underſtanding is not *viſible* becauſe it hath no colours, it is not *audible* becauſe it hath no ſound, nor is *big* or *little* becauſe it hath no quantity; ſo the *Soul* it ſelf muſt needs be of this nature, namely without all *quantity*, *quality*, *time* and *place*: And therefore (according to the Light of *Reaſon*) the Soul cannot be *Corruptible*, but muſt be Immortal.

Secondly, If we further conſider the manner of the *Souls* Operation, ſhe muſt needs be an immortal ſpiritual *ſubſtance*. There are two undoubted *Axioms* and *Maxims* in *Philoſophy* which cannot be gainſayed, namely, That every thing is received according to the *quality* of the receiver; and, That every thing hath the ſame manner of *Eſſence* as it hath of Operation.

Now the *Soul* of Man can eaſily receive impreſſions and thoughts of Immortality, and diſcourſe thereupon, and therefore it is in its own nature and eſſence Immortal.

Ariſtotle obſerves, That the *Soul* in underſtanding is made as it were the Object that is underſtood; becauſe as the *Wax* after it is ſtamp'd is in ſome ſort the very *Seal* it ſelf that ſtamp'd it, namely, *repreſentativè*, ſo the *Soul* in receiving the *ſpecies* of any Object is made the Picture or Image of the thing it ſelf.

Now then, the Underſtanding of a man being able to apprehend Immortality (yea indeed apprehending every Corporeal ſubſtance as if it were

Immortal, I mean by refining and purging it from all groſs, material and corruptible qualities) muſt be much more it ſelf of an immaterial and immortal nature.

The Soul depends not, as do other Forms, either in her Being or Operation upon the Body; For as to the *Act* of Underſtanding, ſhe works without the concurrence of any Bodily *Organ*, and therefore can ſubſiſt by her own nature when ſeparated from the Body, without the concurrence of any matter to ſuſtain her.

The *Independence* of the Soul in her Being and Operation upon the Body is manifeſt, becauſe ſhe hath in ſome meaſure the knowledge of Truth, of God, of *Angels*, and of her Self; She can aſſent, diſcourſe, *abſtract*, invent, contrive, and do the like; none of which *Acts* depend upon any material faculty: And then further this *Independence* of hers appears in thoſe *Raptures* and Extaſies wherein the Soul is rais'd above and from the Body and bodily *Organs*, though not from *informing* the Body, yet certainly from borrowing any aſſiſtance or help there-from for the producing of its *Operation:* The truth is, the *Soul* of Man is ſuch a ſpiritual ſubſtance that it receiveth perfection from all things, for *Intellectus omnia intelligit*, yea wherein all Contraries are reconciled and lay aſide their Oppoſition; For as a Noble Writer truly obſerves, (i) Thoſe things which deſtroy one another in the *World*, maintain and perfect one another in the Mind, one thing being a *means* for the clearer *apprehenſion* of another.

(i) Morney *de verit. Relig. Chriſtian. cap.* 14.

Thirdly, This is alſo evident to *Reaſon*, That if

if the Soul were a mortal periſhing thing, then it would undeniably follow, That thoſe natural deſires which are *planted* in every man's Soul ſhould be fruſtrate and in vain; But ſuch deſires being not ſinful, cannot be fruſtrate, for *Natura nil facit fruſtra*, Nature doth nothing in vain: Now theſe natural deſires of the *Soul* ſhould be in vain if there were not ſomething to content and ſatisfie them; which being not found upon Earth, muſt be ſought for in Heaven, yea in God himſelf: And this plainly ſhews that the Soul is divine and immortal.

Indeed a ſinful deſire ſhould not be fulfilled (as if a Man ſhould vainly deſire to be transformed into an *Angel*;) But as for meer natural deſires in Man, as the deſire to live happy, and to be free of miſery, theſe are not ſinful; and foraſmuch as they cannot be fulfill'd in this life, therefore they muſt be fulfill'd in the life to come.

Naturally every man deſires to have a being after his Body is diſſolved; Hence is that deſire which men have to leave a good Name behind them, and that it may go well with their Poſterity, and the like: And from this Natural inſtinct come thoſe ambitious deſires in vain men to erect coſtly Sepulchres and Monuments after their death, and to call their Houſes and Lands after their own Names; yea the pooreſt Tradeſmen hath this deſire when he can reach no higher, he will have a Stone laid upon his Grave with his Name upon it: Now this very ambitious deſire that is in man is a teſtimony in his mind of the immortality of his Soul, that it ſubſiſteth after this life, and dieth not with the Body.

Fourthly, Another reaſon of the Souls Immortality,

tality (which is also obvious to the Light of Nature) may be drawn from the dignity and preheminence of Man above other Creatures, which were appointed to be subject and serviceable to him; Now this dignity cannot possibly stand with the Souls mortality: For would not many other Creatures far excel Man in health, strength, swiftness, and in the duration of their being, if Man's Soul were not *Immortal?*

Alas how subject is the nature of Man to weakness, faintness, cares, fears, jealousies, discontents and all other miseries of Mind and Body, which other Creatures are not so obnoxious unto? Is there not disturbance in our very peace, and have not our contentments and comfort here their *vexation* and interruption? And must not their miseseries be exceeding miserable whose very happiness in this Life is unhappy, if there were not a Life to come? Mortality and corruption make the want of *Reason* a priviledge to other Creatures; And in this case the Beasts would be so much the more happy than Man, by how much the less they know their own misery: And therefore there must be some other thing wherein Man far excels the other Creatures, and that is in the Spiritualness and Immortality of his Soul.

Fifthly, Every corruptible mortal thing is subject to time and motion, but the Soul of Man is neither subject to time nor motion, and consequently she is not corruptible and *mortal.*

That the *Soul* is not subject to motion is cleared thus; *Motion* hindereth the Soul from attaining its own perfection, when the Soul is free from motion and *perturbation* then it is most perfect, and most fit

fit to underſtand ſpiritual things, ſutable to its own nature: As Water when it is clear and not muddy receives the ſimilitude of the Face with moſt clearneſs.

Again, *Reaſon* it ſelf will tell us, That the things that are true need not a *lie* to further them: But now to make uſe of the Souls *Immortality* as a means to further and incite us to the Duties which we are bound to do, were to uſe a *lie*, if the Soul were not Immortal: For many Religious Duties which we are bound to perform require the contempt of this Life, as the abſtaining from the Fleſh and forſaking the good of this World; which a man would not do if he had not the hope of Immortality, in which he findeth the recompence of his loſſes; yea this very perſwaſion of the Souls *Immortality* made ſome Heathens willingly ſuffer death for the ſafety of their *Countrey*. If our laſt End were only in this Life, then all that we do ſhould be for this laſt End, to aim at it, to procure it, and never to croſs it: Doubtleſs it were great folly and madneſs in men to undergo ſo many hard things as they do, if they had not a perſwaſion in their Hearts of this Immortality, and if their *hope* were only in this *Life* of all men they ſhould be moſt miſerable; But they are perſwaded that the Soul is Immortal, and they find that this World (wherein they now converſe) is too ſteril and empty to fill the vaſtneſs and limit the deſires thereof; It muſt be the poſſeſſion of an immortal, infinite, immutable good, that muſt ſatisfie their Underſtandings and Wills, both which faculties aim at the chiefeſt and higheſt object: The *Underſtanding* is carried *ad ſummam Cauſam*, to the firſt of Truths, and the Will *ad ſummum Bonum*, to the

the laſt of Ends; And therefore He only which is the Firſt and the Laſt can ſatisfie the vaſt deſires of the Soul.

Sixthly, Upon this ground the *Soul* muſt needs be Immortal, becauſe God is juſt: A man may as well ſay that there is no *God* at all, as to ſay that God is *unjuſt*: Now then God being the juſt Judge of all it behoves him to puniſh the Wicked, and to reward the Juſt; but if God did not this in another life he ſhould never do it, for in this life the Wicked flouriſh and the Juſt are oppreſſed: Therefore as God is juſt, there remains another Life after this, wherein the Souls of the Juſt ſhall be rewarded, and the Souls of the Wicked ſhall be puniſhed. If the Soul were Mortal, foraſmuch as in this World wicked men proſper in their Wickdeneſs, and good men (as to their outward being) periſh in a way of Righteouſneſs, how ſhould the Juſtice of God who is the Supreme Being, and whoſe ways are ways of *Righteouſneſs*, be vindicated?

Seventhly, It may ſatisfie the *Reaſon* of any man that the Soul is *Immortal*, ſince there is an univerſal conſent and agreement of all Nations of the Earth in one or other kind of Religion, and the Worſhip of ſome *Deity*, which is raiſed out of this *hope*, That that God whom they worſhip will reward their Piety, if not here yet in another Life. *Nulla gens adeò extra leges eſt projecta, ut non aliquos Deos credat*, ſaith *Seneca*: Hence proceeded thoſe Fictions of the Poets touching the *Elyſian* Fields, or places of Happineſs for men of honeſt and well ordered lives, and places of *Torment* for the wicked and irreligious. It muſt needs be a viſible Character of a a Deity imprinted in the Soul, an irreſiſtible *principle*

ciple in Man's nature, that muſt conſtrain it unto thoſe ſundry Religious Ceremonies (obſerved among all Nations) wherein even in places of *Idolatry*, ſome were ſo irkſom and repugnant to Nature, and others ſo void of *Reaſon*, as that nothing but a firm and deep perſwaſion of a Divine Judgement, and of their own Immortality could ever have impoſed them upon their *Conſciences*: And beſides this conſent of men unto Religion in general, we find it alſo unto this one part thereof, namely the *Immortality* of the *Soul*; All the wiſeſt and beſt reputed *Philoſophers* for Learning and Honeſty, and even *Barbarians*, Infidels and ſavage people have diſcern'd it by the glimmerings of the Light of *Reaſon*.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

The verity *and excellency of the* Chriſtian *Religion evinc'd by* Reaſon.

THE Light of Reaſon is of excellent uſe to convince *Heathens* and Infidels of the truth of the *Chriſtian* Religion, there being no Religion at this day profeſſed throughout the World that hath ſo much reaſon in it and for it as the Chriſtian Religon hath; if we conſider the way of cleanſing and expiating Sin by *Chriſt*, the dignity and excellency of the Perſon of the *Mediator*, the exactneſs of *Divine* Juſtice, which requires Satisfaction, the Rewards and Puniſhment preſcribed and appointed by the *Chriſtian* Religion, the excellent Doctrine and Inſtructions thereof, the Exemplary Life of Chriſt and His Apoſtles; How many things in our Religion are witneſſed to and approved in the Writings of the moſt Rational and Learned Heathens; and how the greateſt Enemies of the Chriſtian Religion, as *Julian*, *Porphyry* and others were once Chriſtians, and came to renounce the ſame meerly through Pride and Diſcontent: If theſe and other things relating to our Religion be but duly weighed, it will appear even to the Eye of *Reaſon* that there is much Truth and Excellency therein, and that other Religions are but fictitious and vain, having no rational *Conſiſtence* in

in them. But we will handle this matter more particularly, though with as much *Brevity* as poſſibly we can.

Firſt, The *Antiquity* of the Chriſtian Religion proveth it to be the true Religion; *Prima ſunt vera, verum eſt prius*; That is moſt true which is moſt antient: Seeing the true Religion is the way whereby Man muſt come to God, and have Communion with him, and is *copula relationis* between God and Man, it muſt needs be as Antient as Man is: As for the Writings of moſt of the *Heathens*, unleſs it be thoſe that are forged and ſuppoſitious, they are but of yeſterday in compariſon of *Moſes* the Lawgiver under God to the *Jews*; even *Orpheus* the firſt Heathen Poet was *eight* hundred years after *Moſes*, as *Strabo*, *Plutarch* and *Diodorus Siculus* teſtifie. The moſt Antient Records of the Heathens began in *Solon*'s time, which was in the time of *Eſdras*; the *Romans* had their Religion from the *Græcians*, and the *Græcians* from *Cecrop* an *Egyptian*; and the *Carthaginians* had theirs from *Cadmus* a *Phœnician*; Now theſe two Countries, *Egypt* and *Phœnicia*, with the Mediterranean Sea do compaſs about *Judæa*, and therefore any man that's rational may eaſily perceive that all their Religion came from the *Jews*. This is ſufficiently demonſtrated by ſeveral Writers of ours, and particularly by Mr. *Gale* in his late Books; ſo that it would be ſuperfluous for me to enlarge upon this ſubject.

When the Wiſe men of *Greece* ask'd their Gods whence the knowledge of Arts and Sciences ſhould come, they received this Anſwer, *Solus utique Chaldæus ſapiens*; and *Orpheus* their antient Poet tells us that when God was angry He deſtroyed the World,

World, committed the Truth *uni Chaldæo*: And *Plato* in his *Epimenides* referreth all, *uni Barbaro*. If it be demanded who this *Chaldean*, this *Barbarian* ſhould be, the *Egyptians* call him *Theut*, which ſignifieth a Stranger, meaning *Abraham*, for ſo *Origen* againſt *Celſus* and *Joſephus* againſt *Appian* ſay plainly, that when the Heathen Nations uſed to Conjure they would make uſe of *Abraham's* Name, ſaying, *Per Deum Abraham*. Well then, if the *Jewiſh* Religion be Ancient, ours muſt needs be ſo too; for ours is the ſame with theirs *Evangelically* conſidered; their Types, Sacrifices, Prophecies and Ordinances referring to Chriſt, who is the very *ſubſtance* of the Chriſtian Religion: The *Moſaical* Law of the Old Teſtament, what is it elſe but *Evangelium reconditum*, a veiled Goſpel? And the Goſpel in the New Teſtament, what is it but *Lex Revelata*? the Law of the Old Teſtament revealed: And thus it appears that the Chriſtian Religion is the moſt Ancient.

Secondly, If we look at the means and way of *Atonement* and Propitiation held forth in the Chriſtian Religion, it muſt needs appear to be the moſt Wiſe and Reaſonable of any Religion: The Eternal God or *Supreme* Being as He is full of Love and Mercy, ſo He is Juſt and Righteous; His Juſtice is infinite as Himſelf is, He will ſo ſhew Mercy as that He will appear to be infinitely Juſt toward the the Offendor; and therefore in *Reaſon* there muſt be ſome way or means of Satisfaction and Atonement found out, or elſe God and Man being ſeparated by Sin could not be reunited.

The wiſer ſort among the *Heathens* were convinc'd by the Light of *Reaſon*, That Man being alienated

alienated from God, and not able of himſelf to come to God in regard of his darkneſs and ignorance, there is a neceſſity of ſome way or means of cleanſing and atonement: Hence came the multitude of their Sacrifices and Oblations, eſpecially when any great Plague or Judgment was upon them: But now that Chriſt the *Son* of God, who is equal with God, ſhould be this way or means by giving up himſelf a Sacrifice for Sin, of this they were wholly ignorant. Is it ſo that the Juſtice of God offended by Sin is infinite? Then it is but reaſonable, that this infinite Juſtice ſhould have infinite reparation and ſatisfaction, which neither Angels nor Men (being but finite Creatures) can give to the infinite God; And therefore unleſs the Mediator or *Days-man* that takes up the difference between God and man be himſelf the infinite God as well as man, ſuch an infinite Satisfaction cannot be given. This way or means being contrived and found out only by the wiſe infinite God, and clearly held forth in the Chriſtian Religion (and in no other Religion beſides) it muſt needs be even by the Light of Reaſon the beſt and ſafeſt, and trueſt Religion, as that which vindicates the Honour of the great God, and gives true peace and ſecurity to man.

Thirdly, The Glorious *Miracles* wrought by Chriſt may convince any man's *reaſon* of the Truth of the Chriſtian Religion. Not only *Joſephus* and other *Jews* beſides him, but alſo divers *Heathen* Authors and ſome of Chriſt's greateſt Adverſaries do acknowledge His Miracles: *Julian* the *Apoſtata* (as great an Enemy as he was) confeſs'd that *Jeſus* cured the Blind, and the Lame, and delivered ſome from *Devils* that were poſſeſſed in *Bethſaida* and *Bethany*; *Pilate* himſelf in a Letter of his to the Emperor *Tiberius* witneſſeth,

That *Jeſus* gave ſight to the *Blind*, cleanſed the *Lepers*, healed them that were *diſeaſed*, delivered them that were *poſſeſſed* from Devils, *over-ruled* the Waters, *raiſed* the Dead, and *roſe* again Himſelf from the *dead* after three days: Hereupon *Tertullian* bids the *Senate* and People of *Rome* read their own *Commentaries*, and ſearch their Records, where they ſhall find the Miracles of *Jeſus*, which if they had not been ſufficiently known to be true and real, *Tertullian* himſelf in this Caſe might have been eaſily convicted of lying and forgery. Theſe Miracles of Chriſt were wrought not in one or two places, but in many, not in a corner but in the open view of the World, and were attended with ſuch *Majeſty* and Power, that there are thouſands that will rather die on a *Rack* than deny or gainſay the ſame. *Jeſus* wrought great Miracles (ſaith *Joſephus*) and although He was *Crucified* and put to death, yet His *Diſciples* forſook him not, but did *cleave* unto him: And as He Himſelf wrought many Miracles when he was upon Earth, ſo His Diſciples, after He was gone from them, by His power and virtue did likwiſe effect ſuch *Miracles* as fill'd the World with the fame of them, and were a ſpecial means to convert whole Kingdoms to Chriſt.

If any be ſo abſurd and impudent as to deny the *Miracles* of Chriſt, then I would ask of them whether it be not a great and ſtrange Miracle, That ſo many Nations, and in them ſo many Wiſe and Learned men ſhould follow and adore a poor contemptible man without Miracles, and ſhould be willing to die for Him, even for Him that died a curſed ignominious Death upon the Croſs! If His Miracles were not great and far ſurmounting the Nature and

and capacity of a meer Man; if they were not divine and ſupernatural, can any ſober man imagin that ſo many thouſands would be ſo far convinc'd and perſwaded by them as to die joyfully and triumphantly for the Name and Honour of this *Jeſus*? Is it a Miracle to work upon a man by touching him, and much more without touching him, and moſt of all without ſeeing him? Then what a Miracle is it to work powerfully in the Hearts of whole Nations a far off, without once ſeeing them, and to touch them without coming at them, and to convert and draw them to Himſelf without touching them with His Hand? Yea but ſay ſome (very abſurdly and *irrationally*) Chriſt and His Apoſtles wrought Miracles by the help of Magick; Let ſuch vain men reſolve us if ever they knew or heard of a *Magician* that wrought ſuch Miracles, and came with ſuch power and efficacy upon the Hearts of all ſorts of men after his death; as *Jeſus* did? And as for His Apoſtles, what gain or advantage could they get by exerciſing this *Magick*? No conſiderate man will attempt any great matter but for ſome end or other; Now what Profit, what Preferment, what Honour in this World got they by it? Nay did it not procure them much Hatred, Danger, Impriſonment, Torments, and at laſt Death it ſelf? *Magicians* uſually hide themſelves and conceal their Art when they are purſued for it; But did the Apoſtles do ſo? What a ſtrange kind of *Magick* is this, that will needs be known and *exerciſed* even in deſpite of the rage of *Rulers* and People, yea of Death it ſelf? Doubtleſs 'tis very remarkable, that as in *Moſes* time God ſo ordered (in His wiſe Providence) that there ſhould be many great Magicians in *Egypt*, that He might make His own

Power the more evident; So in the times of Chriſt and His Apoſtles there was great ſtore of them in *Judea*, *Rome* and other places, that a difference might be put between the Illuſions of Satan and the miraculous Works of God. *Pliny* reports that there were never more Magicians in the World than in the Reign of *Nero*, which was the time of ſpreading the Goſpel by *Chriſt*'s Apoſtles, neither was the vanity of that Art (as he ſaith) ever more apparently known than at that time: If therefore this Art of *Magick* did never flouriſh more in Princes Courts than in the times of the Apoſtles, why did not one or other ſtep forth to vanquiſh or convict them before the Magiſtrates? *Origen* (not to mention here other Learned men that were converted to Chriſt) was himſelf a great Philoſopher, and fellow-Diſciple to *Plotinus* who is highly commended by the *Philoſophers*; can any ſober man imagine that he and others of great judgment and abilities would ſuffer themſelves (like ſo many fools and mad men) to be led with vain Illuſions? Or to attribute thoſe things to God's ſpecial miraculous Operation which depended wholly upon *Natural* Cauſes? Eſpecially ſeeing that both *Origen* and alſo *Cyprian* before their Converſion to Chriſt had profeſſed the Art of Magick! If it be further ſaid that the Apoſtles were influenced by pride and vain-glory in doing what they did, how happeneth it then that each of them did not cauſe himſelf to be worſhipped and adored, as the Idol-gods and *Mahomet* did? If they were ſo vain-glorious in their works as is pretended, why did they not make uſe of their own Names, and exalt themſelves? but refer all to *Jeſus*, and give him the power and glory of all, who was ſo much deſpiſed by

by the great men of the World? Surely this muſt needs be from God and from a divine power, and not from Satan nor from Men.

Fourthly, Let a man but rationally conſider the Life and Doctrine of *Jeſus*, who is the Author and ſubſtance of the Chriſtian Religion, and he will be convinc'd of the *verity* and excellency of it; What was the Life and Converſation of *Jeſus* upon Earth (even by the confeſſion both of *Jews* and *Gentiles*) but the very pattern of Virtue and Piety? What was it but the very Body of the Legal *Types* and ſhadows, and the ſubſtance of the Predictions and Prophecies concerning the *Meſſias?* How *wiſe*, how patient, how meek and humble, how loving and compaſſionate to Mankind? How holy and heavenly minded, how diligent, faithful and impartial was he in the Work of God? He did neither flatter the greateſt nor diſcourage the meaneſt, but delivered the whole Counſel of God without reſpect of perſons: What a publick ſpirit, what ſelf-denial, what excellent Virtues and Graces did *Jeſus* ſhew forth both in His Actions and Sufferings? (His Enemies themſelves being Judges) Inſomuch that *Porphyry* acknowledged Him to be a moſt *Excellent* Man, though (ſaith he) the Chriſtians are to blame to Worſhip Him as God. And *Pilate's* Wife deſired that her Husband might not meddle with that *Juſt* man. To His painful Death which He ſuffered for us He went as a Sheep to the ſlaughter, not opening His mouth, and prayed moſt affectionately for His Enemies upon the Croſs, Father *forgive* them, for they know not what they do. Never was there ſuch an Example of Virtue and Holineſs as *Jeſus* was, and therefore how can any

man of *reaſon* think that he ſhould be the Author or Founder of a *falſe* Religion? As for His Doctrine and Inſtructions, there cannot be any found out or deviſed more excellent and precious; Never man ſpake as He ſpake.; What was the continual ſubject of His Preaching and Diſcourſe but the evil of Sin, the vanity of this World, the goodneſs and mercy of God in pardoning the Sinner, the excellency of Holineſs and Righteouſneſs, the glory and happineſs of Heaven: He teacheth not His Diſciples how to obtain the Riches, Honours and Pleaſures of this World, how to be great amongſt men, and to ſeek the praiſe and applauſe of men, how to *Conquer* Kingdoms and ſubdue Nations by the *material* Sword; But he teacheth them how to deny themſelves and take up the Croſs and follow Him, how to be Crucified to the World and the Fleſh, to lay up Treaſures in Heaven, to forgive their Enemies, and do good to them that deſpitefully uſe them: Was there ever ſuch Heavenly Doctrine, ſuch Excellent Inſtructions as proceeded out of His mouth? If we look to the Precepts in Man's Laws, (as thoſe amongſt the *Lacedemonians*, *Athenians*, *Romans*) they neither command all good, nor forbid all evil. The Laws of men are limited according to time, place and perſons; As the *Wiſe* men of *Perſia* anſwered the *King*, who would have married his own *Siſter*, That indeed there was a *Law* that a man might not *marry* his own Siſter, but yet they found another Law, That the *King* might do what he would; (and ſo by this means he ſhall have more liberty to ſin than his Subjects.) But now on the contrary the *Laws* of the Chriſtian Religion do command all that is good, and forbid and reſtrain

all

all that is evil; the Precepts thereof are general and impartial to all perſons, to the King as well as the Subject, to the Maſter as well as the Servant, to the rich as well as the poor, wthout exception. No other Religion or Doctrine reacheth the Heart and inward man but only this: Where can we find another *Law* that hath in it *Non concupiſces*, Thou ſhalt not luſt, which ſtriketh at the very *root* and core of corruption. Other *Laws* teach men to advance and enlarge their worldly intereſt and power, and to be in favour with Princes; But the *Precepts* of the Chriſtian Religion teach us to forſake the World, and not ſeek great things for our ſelves, nor be ambitious of the favour of great men, but to live *above* it. And as God Himſelf is a *Spirit*, and doth chiefly require the *Heart*, ſo that Worſhip which pleaſeth Him muſt be ſpiritual, and ſuch a Worſhip is preſcribed and commanded by the Laws of Chriſt; whereas all other Religions in the World, as they proceed from man, ſo man himſelf being *Corporeal*, the Worſhip that he chiefly preſcribeth muſt be Corporeal alſo, and not Divine and Spiritual, as the Chriſtian Religion chiefly requires: Other Religions attribute the praiſe to man either in whole or in part, but the Chriſtian Religion attributeth all to God, as the higheſt Truth, the chiefeſt Good, and ultimate End of all.

Fifthly, The nature and ſucceſs of Chriſt's Kingdom may ſerve to convince any man's *reaſon* that the Chriſtian Religion is divine and *heavenly*; By what weak means, by what contemptible *Inſtruments* hath Chriſt advanced and enlarged his Kingdom? How hath he from time to time confounded things

that are by things that are not? Whereas men will have apt Inſtruments to every action, and the Matter alſo well diſpos'd to work upon, Chriſt chooſeth weak and unapt Inſtruments for carrying on His work in the World; not the Wiſe, and *Noble*, and Learned of the World, but Poor *ſimple* men to be His Apoſtles and Ambaſſadors; and then for the Matter which they were to work upon, namely the *World*, it was altogether unprepared, both *Jews* and *Gentiles* hating Chriſt and His Apoſtles: *Ulpian* the chiefeſt Lawyer, *Galen* the chiefeſt Phyſician, *Porphyry* and *Plotinus* the chiefeſt Philoſophers then living, were deſperate Enemies to them, and wrote Books againſt Chriſt and the Chriſtian Religion: *Julian* the Emperour forbad Schools of Learning to the Chriſtians in hatred of Chriſtianity, and the other perſecuting Emperours deviſed moſt exquiſite Torments to be inflicted on the poor Chriſtians, and put *thouſands* of them to a cruel death; and yet for all this Chriſtianity prevailed, and the *Kingdom* of Chriſt was enlarged; Which is an undoubted Proof and *Demonſtration* (even to the Eye of *Reaſon*) of the Truth and Excellency of the Chriſtian Religion, and that the Kingdom of Chriſt is moſt divine and powerful, and not worldly, weak and carnal. That this *Jeſus*, who was born in the little Countrey of *Judæa* ſubdued by the *Romans*, of poor Parents in a ſorry Village, deſtitute of Friends and of all Worldly helps and advantages, ſhould give Law to and *Conquer* the World by His Goſpel or the Word of His Kingdom; is not this wonderful! And would ye know what He promiſeth His Subjects and Followers? Why, inſtead of great matters that they might expect in this Life, He tells them

them plainly what great Afflictions and Tribulations they muſt endure for His ſake, if they will follow Him and be His Diſciples indeed; they muſt expect to be perſecuted, reproached, ſcourged, impriſoned, and put to death: Whereas other Kings and Monarchs promiſe great Dignities and Preferments in the World to their followers, this King on the contrary by the Doctrine of the *Croſs* drew the Nations to Him; other *Monarchs* Conquer by killing their Enemies, this *King* Conquered by *dying* for His Enemies; the death other *Monarchs* is the decay and ruine of their *Kingdoms* and Conqueſts, but the death of *Jeſus* hath eſtabliſhed and enlarged His Kingdom, and is the life and happineſs of His Subjects.

Who ſeeth not therefore by the Light of *Reaſon*, a *humane* weakneſs in the greatneſs of Worldly *Empires*, and a divine power in the weakneſs of Chriſt's *Kingdom?* When He died and was buried His Kingdom ſeem'd to die and to be *buried* with Him; a few poor deſpiſed Followers He had, and theſe were at their wits end when their Lord and Maſter was Crucified and laid in the Grave; Well, but at length they open their mouths and *boldly* teach men to believe on *Jeſus* who was *Crucified* and Buried, but is now Riſen again, and to ſuffer for His ſake; And if they be forbidden, they will rather *die* than not Preach and own this Crucified *Jeſus*; hereupon they are accuſed and brought before *Magiſtrates*, where they own their *Crime* (as their Adverſaries term'd it) and are not aſham'd of it; and is not this admirable? Other Malefactors are tormented to make them *confeſs* their fault, and theſe are tormented to make them *conceal* it; thoſe hold

their

their peace to *ſave* their lives, & theſe *die* for ſpeaking; and yet by this ſtrange way and means Chriſt that was crucified ſpreads His *Kingdom* and fills the whole World with it. Out of weakneſs he brings forth *ſtrength*, and out of death he brings forth *life*; And who can thus draw one contrary out of another? Who can thus overcome by yielding, who can thus trample upon and triumph over his Enemies by dying, but *Jeſus* in whom the power of the Eternal God was, and whoſe Kingdom is not of this World, but Divine and Heavenly? Whilſt He lived upon Earth He was deſpiſed and rejected, but after His death He is worſhipped as God, even to this day, and His true Followers will rather *die* a thouſand deaths than deny His Eternal *Godhead* and Kingdom. And may not this one *Conſideration* (if there were no more) touching the Kingdom of Chriſt wherein it far excels the Kingdoms of this World, ſerve to convince any ſober rational man of the verity and efficacy of the Chriſtian Religion?

Sixthly, What ſtrange *Converſions* and Changes have been wrought by the Goſpel of Chriſt in the Hearts and Lives of ſome of the moſt eminent and famous men for *Learning* and Parts? How were they wrought upon and converted by the plain Preaching of weak ſimple men? Even by the fooliſhneſs of Preaching (as the World counts it) that ſo the divine power and excellency of this *Jeſus* and of the Chriſtian Religion might the more appear. *Paul* befor his Converſion was counted a wiſe and *learned* man, and was in great reputation, ſo that *Porphyry* the famous Philoſopher ſaith of him that it was great *pity* ſuch a man ſhould be a *Chriſtian*; yet when *Paul* had received the greateſt Authority, and raged moſt againſt the Goſpel and Kingdom of Chriſt, he was wonderfully *converted* and turned quite another way,

way, and was glad to tread many a *weary* ſtep and to endure many great *difficulties* for the Goſpels ſake. *Origen* alſo a man of great Learning and knowledge in *Philoſophy* and the Arts, being converted by a divine power to the *Chriſtian* Religion, was content to be a poor *Catechiſt* in *Alexandria*, and was every day in danger of death, when he might have been with his fellow *Plotinus* in great Authority and Favour, had it not been for his Chriſtian profeſſion. Surely it muſt needs be ſome Divine and Heavenly power that did thus prevail upon theſe men and upon many other Wiſe and Learned men that might be mentioned: Never was there ſuch *wonderful* Converſions in any Religion as in this, never ſuch *ſound* Repentance and Reformation, never ſuch *true* Juſtice, Fortitude and Conſtancy in Affliction even to Death and Martyrdom as in this; ſo that it was commonly ſaid of the Chriſtians, *Soli Chriſtiani mortis contemptores.*

Seventhly, 'Tis an Argument of the Truth and Excellency of the Chriſtian Religion, That it hath been ſo much oppoſed and perſecuted from time to time by the rage and cruelty of the *Devil* and wicked men; As it was commonly ſaid of that Monſter *Nero* a Perſecutor of Chriſtians, That it muſt needs be a good and *excellent* thing which ſo wicked a man *hated*: The more wicked and ungodly men are, the more they hate that which is Divine, and which moſt reſembles the Holy God. Now no Religion or Profeſſion in the World hath been ſo deſperately hated and perſecuted by wicked ungodly wretches as the Chriſtian Religion; and yet the more it has been oppoſed and trampled upon by them, the more it has prevailed and flouriſhed, even in deſpight of

their

their rage and malice. What a miſerable end did befal *Herod* and other great Perſecutors of this Religion? Many of which did vindicate Chriſt and His Truth at and by their *death*, (when the Hand of God was heavy upon them,) though they had *raged* againſt Him in their life time, and done whatever they could to root out His Kingdom and People. Nay *Satan* himſelf the greateſt Perſecutor of all hath witneſſed for the Chriſtian Religion againſt himſelf; All the Art *Magick* which he invented could never *Conjure* or call up Chriſt: *Plotinus* and *Apollonius* and other great Magicians that rais'd up the Image of *Jupiter* and other Heathen Gods, though they aſſayed with all their skill and power to bring up the Image of *Chriſt*, yet could they never effect it; for Chriſt is not ſubject to their power, being infinitely above them. 'Tis well known to the Heathens, that at the Birth and Death of this *Jeſus* their Idol-Gods fell down, and their Oracles at *Delphos*, *Dodon* and other places were ſtricken *dumb*; Inſomuch as *Porphyrie* himſelf confeſſeth and bewaileth, that ſince the time that *Jeſus* was Worſhipped they have had no benefit at all by any of their Gods: The Voice that was heard in the Air in the Reign of *Tiberius Cæſar* about the time of Chriſt's death, commanding the *Maſter* of the Ship to cry aloud that the *Great* God *Pan* is dead, upon which followed great *ſcreechings* and *lamentations* in the *Air*, we find mentioned in divers *credible* Authors. *Lactantius* tells us that when the Heathens offered Sacrifice to their Gods the very preſence of a Chriſtian would daſh and ſpoil their *Myſteries*; and thereupon came that ſpeech which we read in *Lucian*, If there be any *Chriſtian* here let him *depart* hence. This *Jeſus* hath made ſuch work amongſt the *Idol-Gods*,

Gods, that *Auguſtine* cries out, Where are your Gods! where are your Prophets! where are your Oracles! where are your Sacrifices! are they not ceaſed? If Chriſt the *Ark* of God comes in place, *Dagon* the great Idol muſt needs fall down. Now the Chriſtian Religion hath *three* great Enemies in the World, *Heathens*, *Jews*, and *Mahumetans*, againſt whoſe Religion or rather *Superſtition* we will ſpeak a few words to ſhew the *unreaſonableneſs* and abſurdity thereof. And *Firſt** touching the *Heathen Gods*, we have this to ſay againſt them in a way of *Reaſon* (which may be much more enlarged) That they muſt needs be vain, and even ridiculous; ſince by the confeſſion of their own *Learned* Writers, theſe Gods or rather *Devils* did command Images to be erected to them, and told the *faſhion* that they were of. And is not this *abſurd* and unbecoming the *Majeſty* of a Deity? ſeeing the true and infinite God who dwells in the Light *inacceſſible* cannot be reſembled by any *Shape?* What did theſe *Dunghil-Gods* of theirs chiefly command and forbid but outward *corporeal* things? Whereas the true God is a *Holy* Glorious Spirit, who commands the Spirits of men, and chiefly requires ſpiritual Worſhip and Obedience. Theſe Gods of theirs were not of *Univerſal* uſe, nor were they good for all things; One forſooth was good for *Medicine*, and another for *Wiſdom*, and another for *War*; whereas the true God is an *Univerſal* perfect Good: The Religion of theſe *Heathen* Gods conſiſted only in offering *Frankincenſe* and Spices, and outward *Oblations*, which could never cleanſe the Soul of man from its ſpots and defilements: And therefore when *Cyril* told *Julian* the

* I. *Reaſons againſt the Heatheniſh Idolatry.*

Apoſtata

Apoſtata that Sin defileth the Soul, and that outward and bodily things could never waſh away the inward filthineſs and corruption of the *Spirit*, this made *Julian* ſtagger, for he could not tell how to anſwer it. What ſhall we ſay further? Are not the *Parents*, *Birth* and *Manners* of theſe *goodly* Deities particularly ſet down by their own *Poets* and *Philoſophers*, and by divers of the Ancient Fathers and our own Modern Writers; and is it not ridiculous for any man to believe that theſe were *true* Gods? Nay truly they were not only *Men* whom the *Heathens* Worſhipped, but *wicked* men, the worſt and *vileſt* of men, given up to *Whoredom* and *Drunkenneſs*, and *Cruelty*, and all manner of vice and wickedneſs; Yea they were *Devils* and wicked Spirits that appeared in the likeneſs of Men, and commanded themſelves to be *worſhipped*. So abſurd and irrational were ſome of theſe poor *Heathens*, that they did not only worſhip *wicked* Men and *Devils*, but even *Beaſts* alſo; an *Ox*, a *Dog*, a *Crocodile*, yea *Onions* and *Garlick*. O monſtrous folly and madneſs! How did the *Devil* bewitch them? What horrid cruelty did he exerciſe upon them, commanding them to ſacrifice Men and Women to him when he was grievouſly offended with them, (as he doth at this day in ſome Heatheniſh Countries.) But when he was more *mild* and gentle, then *forſooth* he muſt have *Stage-Plays*, Muſick, Dancing and the like Paſtimes to make him *merry*: Behold here the Vanity and *Brutiſhneſs* of the Heatheniſh Idolatry. *Secondly*, As for the *Jews* * they are moſt unreaſonable in their Enmity againſt Chriſt and the Chriſtian Religion. The truth of the

* II. *Againſt the Jewiſh Religion.*

Old

Old Teſtament is acknowledged by them as well as by us, though they do not rightly and ſpiritually underſtand it, by reaſon of the *veil* which is upon their Hearts to this day; So blind and ſo deluded they are, as to hold that the true *Meſſias* is yet to come; that *Jeſus* is not the *Meſſias*; and that when the *Meſſias* firſt comes he ſhall be great in the World, and have a Princely *Court* and Attendants at *Jeruſalem*; and that he ſhall ſubdue all the Enemies of the *Jews*. Now truly theſe are but vain *dreams* and fancies of theirs, and quite contrary to Scripture and *Reaſon*. In *Jacob's* Propheſie concerning the *Meſſias*, *Gen.*49.10. we read that the *Scepter* was not to depart from *Judah*, nor a Law-giver from between his Feet till *Shiloh* come; by which *Shiloh* is meant the true *Meſſias*: But the *Scepter* was then newly departed when *Jeſus* came, and therefore He is the true *Shiloh* or *Meſſias*; The Scepter, as is well known, was in *Judah* till the Captivity, and after the Captivity it continued till *Ariſtobulus* and *Hircanus*, who contending for it were both of them diſpoſſeſſed of it, and *Herod* an *Idumæan* and a ſtranger was inveſted with the *Royal* Dignity, and then came Chriſt as was long before propheſied, after whoſe coming the *Jews* were diſperſed and ſcattered throughout the Earth, ſo that now there is no diſtinct Tribe of *Judah*, but they are all mingled one with another; the *Roman* Emperors ſtill labouring to root out the *Jews*, and eſpecially the Tribe of *Judah*, which made them to confound their *Genealogies*. That the *ſeventy* Weeks referring to the coming of the true *Meſſias*, Dan. 9.24. are long ſince determined, he that runs may read it, and yet the *Meſſias* not come, if we will believe the obſtinate *Jews*. In their *Talmud* we read that the

Diſciples

Diſciples of *Hillel* whom they highly eſteem, perceiving the firſt ſeven Weeks in *Daniel* to fall out ſo juſtly, they looked for the coming of the *Meſſias* in thoſe days being long before the full time, becauſe they had read in the Prophecy of *Iſaiah* that the Lord would ſhorten thoſe days; And immediately before the *Incarnation* of our Saviour we find that there was a general expectation of the coming of the *Meſſias* amongſt the *Jews*, as appears by their continual ſending to *John Baptiſt* to know whether he himſelf was the *Meſſias*, or they muſt expect another; And about this time alſo (which may be a further proof that the *Meſſias* is already come) there were more falſe Chriſts and deceivers, (ſuch as *Judas*, *Theudas*, *Ganlonites*, *Barcosba*) as the Scriptures and *Joſephus* with other Writers bear witneſs, than was ever before or ſince. How came it to paſs that the glory of the ſecond Temple, *Hag.* 2. 10. was greater than the glory of the *firſt?* Was it not by the coming and preſence of Chriſt? For outwardly the *firſt* Temple was far more *glorious* than the *ſecond*, and therefore the *ſecond* muſt be made more glorious in ſome other other reſpect; Nor conld the deſtruction of the ſecond Temple (which yet we read of *Luke* 19. 44. and likewiſe in the Hiſtory of *Joſephus*) fall out before, but muſt needs be ſince the coming of the true *Meſſias*. *Suidas* reports this from one *Theodoſius* a Noble *Jew*, That before Chriſt ſharply rebuked the *Phariſes* they marvelling at His wiſe Queſtions and Anſwers, made Him one of the *Prieſts* (without which He being of the Tribe of *Judah* could not have been ſuffered to Preach at *Nazareth* and *Capernaum*) and regiſtred His Name in theſe words, Jeſus *the Son of the Living GOD and of the Virgin* Mary; which Regiſter

giſter was preſerved at the ſacking of *Jeruſalem*, and afterward laid up in the City *Tiberias*. The *Jews* themſelves have been miſerably deceived in prefixing the time of the coming of the *Meſſias*, ſo that in this matter they are become ridiculous one to another; there is now no *Bethlehem* where the *Meſſias* ſhould be born if He be not already come: The *Prophecies* are clearly fulfilled, and thoſe dreadful Judgments threatned againſt the *Jews* (for rejecting the *Meſſias*) manifeſtly even in the view of the Word brought upon them. *Veſpaſian* at the Siege of *Jeruſalem* offered them Peace, but they would not accept of it; he made his entrance into their City at *Cedron* where they took Chriſt, on the ſame Feaſt-day that Chriſt was taken, and whipped them where they *whipped* Chriſt, and ſold *twenty Jews* for a *penny* as they had ſold Chriſt for *thirty pence*; and thus they were puniſhed in the ſame kind that they had ſinned againſt God. Are they not Vagabonds at this day throughout the World, hated of all men for *crucifying* Chriſt? Having no *Temple*, no City, no *fixed* Worſhip, no ſetled *Government*, neither *Civil* nor *Eccleſiaſtical*. And though they attempted by the Aſſiſtance of *Julian* that wicked Emperor to Build again their City and Temple, yet their Attempt came to nothing, but was deſtroyed by *Fire* from Heaven: And now, poor Wretches, they *abide* (and have been ſo for many hundred years) without a *King*, and without a *Sacrifice*, and without an *Ephod*, and without *Teraphim*. *Hoſ.* 3. 4. And whereas they vainly expect that the *Meſſias* at His firſt coming will be an outward glorious *Prince*, like the Princes of this World, this is quite contrary to many *Texts* in the Old Teſtament, which

they pretend to believe, and which aſſure us that the *Meſſias* ſhall come in great *meekneſs* and *lowlineſs*. *Zach.* 9. 9. That He ſhall be *wounded* and *pierced* for the *ſins* of the People, and that their *iniquities* ſhall be laid upon Him. *Pſal.* 22. 16, 17, 18. *Iſa.* 53. 4, 5. 6. That He who is the *Shepherd* and God's *fellow* ſhall be *ſmitten* by the *Sword* of the Lord, and that the *Meſſias* ſhall be *cut off* and ſlain. *Zach.* 13. 7. *Dan.* 9. 26. Out of theſe and the like Texts in the *Old Teſtament* the Ancient *Rabbins* do generally gather that the true *Meſſias* ſhould be ſuch a perſon, and ſo dealt with as is deſcribed in theſe places, and that His Kingdom ſhould be Divine and Spiritual, and ſhould not conſiſt in outward worldly pomp and magnificence. By what hath been already ſaid (and much more that might be alledged) any rational ſober man may eaſily perceive how vain and unreaſonable, how blind and *contumacious* the *Jews* are at this day in denying *Jeſus* to be the true *Meſſias*, and in maligning and oppoſing the Chriſtian Religion. *Thirdly* and laſtly,

* III. *Againſt the* Turkiſh *Superſtition.*

Againſt the Doctrine of *Mahomet* and the *Turkiſh* Religion * there is enough, if not more than enough alledged to convince any man of *reaſon* that it is but of yeſterday, and a meer *Fable* if compared with the Antiquity and Truth of the Chriſtian Religion; And that *Mahomet* himſelf their great Prophet was a vile wicked wretch and Impoſtor, whom God ſuffered in His juſt judgment to delude and even beſot the World; becauſe they had abuſed the precious Goſpel of Chriſt. *Mahomet's* Doctrine forſooth is ſo hardy, and ſo unqueſtionable that it muſt not be diſputed of; which is a ſufficient

evidence

evidence of the vanity and falſeneſs of it. The *Money* is good (ſay they) but you muſt not bring it to the *Touchſtone* to try it, nor muſt you weigh it: whereas Truth loveth trial, and fears no colours. Their fooliſh *Alchoran* (which contains the body and ſubſtance of their Hereſie) is ſtuffed with vain Fables and falſe Tales, fit for Fools and Children; ſo that *Andræas Maurus* a *Saracen* and a Biſhop, beſides many other Writers, noteth at leaſt *nine hundred* Untruths in this wicked *Alchoran*; whereof two in the *Eighth* Section are exceeding groſs and palpable: One, that *Abraham* was the Son of *Lazarus*; the other, that *Mary* the Mother of Chriſt was the Siſter of *Aaron*; both which are manifeſt untruths: And what, ſhall we think that the God of Truth and Wiſdom will regard ſuch falſe Tales and fopperies in His Worſhip as are found in this *Alchoran?* (Be it far from us to entertain ſuch a thought of God.) How groſs and ſenſual, and fooliſh are many things mentioned therein? as *Sect.* 16. where *Mahomet* ſaid that he felt the Hand of God *ſeventy* times colder than *Ice.* Is this becoming the Holy Majeſty of God? And again, that one *Angel* hath *ſeven thouſand* Heads; and that the *Devil* is Circumciſed, and ſuch like ridiculous ſtuff which a Rational diſcreet man would be aſham'd of. If we look to the *Promiſes* and *Rewards* of this Religion, they refer to Pleaſures that are meerly carnal and ſenſual, fit for none but *Sardanapalus*, *Heliogabalus*, and ſuch like monſtrous *Epicures*, that have loſt their Wits and Reaſon. If we conſider the *Precepts* of this Religion, we ſhall find that they are indulgent to *Perjury*, *Adultery*, and other wickedneſs. A *Turk* may have *four* Wives, and *five*

Concubines; he muſt not be accuſed though never ſo wicked under *four* Witneſſes. This wicked Religion of theirs allows Men to *couple* themſelves with *Beaſts*, and to ſpoil one anothers Goods, and therefore it is falſe, wicked, and to be abhorred. And as for the *Miracles* which the *Turkiſh* Religion pretends unto, they have no *Authentick* teſtimony nor poſſibility of Truth in them in the judgment of any ſober *Rational* man. Take one Inſtance for all, which is this; that an *Angel* when he was a Child opened his Heart and took out that *lump* of Blood which is the Cauſe of *Sin*. And then for the way and means of *propagating* this Religion; it is not like that of the Chriſtians, Spiritual and Divine, by the efficacy of the Goſpel of Peace and Reconciliation; But 'tis *Carnal* and Wicked, by Cruelty and Compulſion, killing men that are of a different Religion, ſo that he is the moſt religious amongſt them that can ſhed moſt Blood and deſtroy moſt Chriſtians: And this ſhews even to an Eye of *Reaſon* that the *Mahumetan* Religion is a meer Impoſture, and a moſt wicked *Superſtition*.

CHAP. XII.

CHAP. XII.

The divine Authority of the Holy Scriptures *proved by* Reaſon.

THE Laws of God (as we have heard) differ much from the Laws of men: theſe command only the *outward* man: but the divine Laws reach the Spirit, and command the inward man, which Laws are Recorded in the Sacred Scriptures: now that theſe Holy Writings are the word of God, and do contain the Laws of God and the Rule of our Faith and practice, may be proved by *Reaſon* ſo far as may convince a *Heathen* or Infidel, that there is ſuch a *divine* Authority and Efficacy in theſe Writings as are not to be found in any other. Firſt, then let it be granted, as it hath been clearly *demonſtrated*, that there is one living and true God, and that this God is to be honoured and adored by his *reaſonable* Creatures with that ſervice and worſhip which becomes him: Then it will *undeniably* follow, That there muſt be ſome *Revelation* made by God himſelf, touching that way of worſhip, wherein he will have us obey him (this is practic'd by all wiſe Princes and States who govern their Subjects in a way of Reaſon and of Prudence) for who can know what pleaſeth God but he himſelf, and they to whom he makes known his will and pleaſure. Now then, ſuppoſing ſome *Revelation* of Gods will in order to that ſervice which he will accept, if the Scripture be not this Revelation, where then ſhall we find it? Let any man, if he can, ſhew ſome other or better mani-

feſtation concerning the will and worſhip of the great and Holy God, then what he hath made known in his Written word. Nothing can be the ſtanding unerring Rule of our Faith, but what God himſelf hath made ſo: That which is the Rule muſt be the law of our Beleif, and who can make a Law of this nature but God himſelf? 'Tis unreaſonable to imagine that any men or Creatures can preſcribe to us what we are to beleive concerning God, unleſs God himſelf make known his will and publiſh his Laws. *Secondly*, As for the Scriptures of the Old Teſtament (which are received and imbraced as the word of God both by *Jews* and Chriſtians) let us rationally conſider how the Church of the *Jews*, who were the peculiar People of God, to whom were committed the Oracles of God, *Rom.* 3. 2. have witneſſed theſe Books to be divine and Supernatural. Have they not from time to time, for many Ages together, in their greateſt miſery and affliction, conſtantly acknowledged and contended for the divine Authority thereof, whenas by only denying the ſame, they might have had not only liberty but great preferments in the World? And is it not very obſervable, that though the Princes, high Preiſts and others amongſt the *Jewes* perſecuted the Prophets, and deſpiſed their words whilſt they lived, yet they received their Writings as Prophetical and Divine, when they where dead? and ſince blindneſs and obſtinacy came upon the *Jewes*, notwithſtanding their great enmity and hatred to the Chriſtian Religion, and the Profeſſors thereof, yet the Scriptures of the Old Teſtament, yea thoſe very *Texts* that do evidently confirm the truth of the Chriſtian Religion, are kept pure and uncorrupt amongſt them. *Thirdly*, The Chriſtian Church which embraceth both the Books

of

of the Old and New Teſtament have witneſſed, and do ſtill witneſs to the divine Authority thereof, even to the Death; the whole *Univerſal* Church of God, even from the firſt Penning of the Scriptures, till this very day, have all along profeſſed that theſe Books are divine, and Thouſands of them have Sealed the ſame with their blood: this Teſtimony is of great weight and force, though it be not ſo infallible and effectual to perſwade and ſatisfie the Conſcience, as the *Teſtimony* of the Holy Ghoſt himſelf. Of all *humane* Teſtimonies whereby the Author of any Book that hath, is, or ever ſhall be extant, can be proved or evinced ſo as to ſatisfie mans Reaſon, the *Teſtimony* of the Univerſal Church of God concerning this Book is the greateſt and moſt ſatisfactory, both in reſpect of the multitude, wiſdom, honeſty and faithfulneſs of the witneſſes and the likelyhood, conſtancy and uninterrupted continuance of the *Teſtimony* it ſelf. Is it probable in a way of *Reaſon*, that ſo good and wiſe a God ſhould ſuffer ſo many honeſt well meaning People to be ſo long abuſed and deceived by a falſe or feigned Book fathered upon himſelf: ſuch a horrid *Impoſture*, the God of truth will not endure to lye hid and undiſcovered for ſo many hundred years. Chriſtians of all ſorts and conditions, Noble and Ignoble, Rich and Poor, Learned and unlearned, Married and unmarried, Old and Young, throughout the World for a long time together, have endured the moſt grievous and exquiſite torments that the *Devils* could invent, or the malice of men find out, for the defence of this truth, and that with great conſtancy and alacrity, with an undaunted heart and merry countenance. And can any ſober man think that ſo many thouſand perſons, and ſome of them of great qua-

lity, learning, and prudence, that might have lived bravely and carried a great part in this World, ſhould ſuffer ſo many and ſo great things out of meer weakneſs, pride, vaine glory, diſcontent; or that they ſhould ſuffer for a fable, that hath no Truth, nor reality in it? This Teſtimony (which is taken from the great ſufferings, Chriſtian patience, joy and courage of the Martyrs) is not meerly humane; for that courage and cheerfulneſs which they ſhewed in the midſt of their Torments, was not from the ſtrength of humane Nature and reaſon, but it was from above, and ſupernatural. *Fourthly*, God hath confirmed the *divine* Authority of the *Scriptures* in the view of the World, by many great wonders and Miracles from Heaven; ſuch as Satan himſelf cannot imitate; ſuch as exceed the power of any, yea of all the Creatures in the World; ſuch as the moſt malitious ſubtil Enemies of God's truth could not deny to be divine. Theſe Miracles hath the Lord openly wrought by the hands of *Moſes*, the Prophets, and Apoſtles, which as they were ſufficient to confirm the divine Authority of the Scriptures to them who were eye-witneſſes thereof, ſo the undoubted and clear Narration of them is to us an invincible Argument that the Word and Goſpel of Chriſt is from Heaven and not from men; the Lord witneſſing thereunto both by *Signs* and *wonders*, and with divers *Miracles* and gifts of the *Holy Ghoſt*, according to his own will, *Heb.* 2. 4. What ſhall I ſay of the *Antiquity* of the Scriptures and the Doctrine contain'd therein, which of all Writings and Doctrines that have been taught and publiſhed, is the moſt *Ancient*. In all other Writings and Records the Doctrine of the *Creation*, and fall of man, is omitted, which yet is particularly and plainly

ſet

ſet down in the Scriptures. And truly it is admirable to Conſider how the power and wiſdom and goodneſs of God have appeared in preſerving his written Word and Laws to this day, notwithſtanding the rage and ſubtilty of *Antiochus*, *Nero*, *Diocleſian*, *Julian* the Apoſtate, and other cruel and ſubtil Perſecutors; and notwithſtanding that *Egyptian* darkneſs of *Popery*, Error, and Ignorance, which overſpread the World for ſome *hundred* years ſince Chriſt, and his Apoſtles; during which time theſe ſacred Writings were laid aſide and contemned, and blind Ignorance extolled as the *Mother* of Devotion. *Fifthly*, The very *Stile* of the Scripture argues the divine Authority thereof. By the *Stile* we do not underſtand the external *ſuperficies* of words and phraſes, but the whole order, *contexture* and frame thereof, which fitly agreeth to the dignity of the ſpeaker, and the nature of the Argument treated of; and is excellently and wiſely tempered according to the capacity and *condition* of them for whoſe ſake it was written. Indeed every *Prophet* and Apoſtle almoſt had a peculiar Stile, God making uſe of their ſeveral *faculties* and abilities: *Iſaiah* is Eloquent and ſweet, *David* affectionate, *Solomon* Accurate, *Jeremiah* vehement and more rough, and ſo it may be ſaid of the ſeveral Apoſtles and *Evangeliſts*, that their *Stile* is ſomewhat different, but all of them divine and Heavenly. The Majeſty and excellency of the *Stile* appears in that *Majeſtick* Title and dignity which the Author of the Holy Scriptures, doth juſtly challenge to himſelf, the which imports *Independency* of nature and eſſence, *Supereminency* of power and ſoveraignty, and excellency both of *properties* and works, and is further diſplayed in the *manner* of teaching which is uſed in the Holy

Scriptures, commanding, *promising*, and threatning things above ſenſe and *reaſon*. In this *Book* there are hidden *Myſteries*, divine, and ſupernatural Truths ſuch as exceed all humane capacity, revealed & unfolded without *Argumentation* or *Rhetorical* motives of perſwaſion, and we are required to underſtand and beleive them relying only upon the Truth and credit of the *Revealer*. God the great and abſolute *Soveraign* requires in his word ſuch and ſuch things to be done, ſuch and ſuch duties to be performed by the Sons of men, with great ſtrictneſs and ſeverity; and yet brings no argument to perſwade or confirm the equity of theſe commands, but only the will of the *Commander*, which though it becomes not man to do, yet it well becomes the *Majeſty* of God. In this Book alſo promiſes are made of good things to come, whereof there is no humane probability nor reaſon given to aſſure us of the performance thereof, but I the *Lord* have *ſpoken* it, and I will do it. In the manner of threatning alſo the like majeſty and *Soveraign* Authority may be obſerved throughout the Scriptures, which you ſhall not meet with in meer humane writings. God commands and threatens without reſpect of perſons; be they what they will be, 'tis all one to him: he preſcribes his Laws to all men, Magiſtrates and *Rulers*, Schollers and *Soldiers*, to whole Kingdoms and States, commanding and requiring what is diſtaſtful to their fleſhly nature and intereſt, and forbidding what they approve and commend; promiſing them not *Earthly* Honours and Riches, but Life Eternal, if they be obedient to the *Goſpel*; and threatning them not with Rack or Gibbet, but with eternal Death and Torments if they diſobey. Neither let any man be offended with the low and humble manner of ſpeech uſed in holy Scripture

ture, for it was penned for the uſe and benefit of the *unlearned*, as well as the learned, for thoſe of weak parts, as well as for thoſe of ſtrong parts and abilities; And though the *phraſe* or manner of ſpeech be plain, yet the matter is high and excellent, profound and unutterable. Plainneſs and perſpicuity doth beſt become the truth. A Pearl needs no painting. True beauty needs not a whoriſh dreſs to ſet it forth; nor needs the truth of God to be ſupported or underpropt with forraign aids, for it is of it ſelf ſufficient to uphold and ſuſtain it ſelf. It becomes not the Majeſty of a *Prince* to play the Orator, this would be more *pedantick* in him, then in a perſon more inferior. Though the Scripture ſeems to be plain in word and phraſe, yet it is great in power: No writings of men (be they never ſo well ſet forth with Wit, Learning, and Ornaments of Rhetorick) can ſo enlighten the mind, move the will, pierce the heart, and ſtir up the affections, as the word of God doth. Nor do the Scriptures want *Eloquence*; if the matter be well weighed, no other writing can equalize them. The Song of *Moſes*, the beginning of the Propheſie of *Iſaiah*, and other portions of Scripture, *in variety* and force of *divine* Eloquence, do far exceed and tranſcend all other Authors, *Greek* or *Latine*, that are extant, though never ſo excellently indited and penned; yet it may be eaſily diſcerned, that the one was written by a *Divine*, the other by a humane Spirit. *Sixthly*, the wonderful powerful effects of this doctrine (more then any other) do clearly *demonſtrate*, even to an eye of reaſon, the divine Authority thereof, for it inlighteneth the underſtanding, diſcovereth clearly the evil of ſin, and the vanity of the Creature, converteth the Soul, convinceth the gain-

ſayer, terrifieth the Conſcience of a ſinner, quickeneth and reviveth the wounded Spirit, manifeſteth the thoughts of the heart man, caſteth down ſtrong holds and the power of *Satan*, and remains invincible notwithſtanding all the oppoſition of men and devils; for though the nature thereof be contrary to the will and wiſdome of the fleſh and world, yet ſtill it hath prevailed and overcome. The enemies that have oppoſed this doctrine, were many and mighty and ſubtil: the *Devil*, the *Roman* Emperor, the learned *Philoſophers*, the zealous *Jews*, and the common people being ſtirred up by them, have with incredible fury and falſhood and vigilancy, endeavoured the utter abolition of it, but could never do it. This doctrine conquers where it comes, either it converts or deſtroys its Adverſaries. And what manner of perſons are they whom God chuſeth as his Heralds and Embaſſadors to publiſh this doctrine! are they great and many? are they learned and wiſe? are they potent and mighty in the world? No no, they are in number but few, in outward appearance ſimple, rude, poor and weak, deſpiſed of men; things that are not in the judgment of men; by theſe God hath *confounded* things that are; and through their preaching the Croſs of Chriſt, hath ſubdued many Nations to himſelf; in a little time a great part of this habitable world was converted and brought to the obedience of faith, ſo that *Paul* filled all places from *Jeruſalem* to *Illyricum* with the ſound of the *Goſpel*: Nor is it to be forgotten that the *Jews*, though waſted with many and great Slaughters, and though they had and ſtill have a deſperate Enmity againſt *Chriſt* and the Chriſtian Religion, yet the Scriptures of the old Teſtament have alwayes remain'd ſafe and entire in

thei

their cuſtodie, even when the *Hebrew* language did lye almoſt unknown, and had periſhed altogether, had not God provided for the true Religion by the care of thoſe *Jews*; ſo that (will they, nill they) they ſhall be inſtrumental in maintaining and promoting the doctrine and kingdome of Chriſt. *Seventhly*, That ſweet and admirable *harmony* and conſent, which is found in the ſacred Scriptures, cannot be rationally aſcribed to any but to the Spirit of God and the divine wiſdome, each part agreeing ſo exactly with it ſelf, and with the whole; which ſufficiently appears, by comparing the Propheſies of the old Teſtament touching Chriſt, the calling of the *Gentiles*, the reception of the *Jews*, and other remarkable things, with the accompliſhment of them, as the ſame is plainly declared and revealed in the *new* Teſtament: Such exact *conſent* and agreement as is here to be found, is impoſſible to be feigned of men or Angels, from whom the things foretold were hid till they were revealed. Nor could there be forgery in theſe writings, if we conſider in a way of *reaſon* the length of time in which theſe writings have continued and been judg'd Authentick; that they were not written in one or two, but in many ages; that there was a multitude of Books and of writers imployed in this Service, and that theſe *writers* were diſtant in place one from another, ſo that they could not confer together: and withal if we conſider the deep ſilence of the Adverſaries, who in all that long time (whilſt the Scripture was in writing) could never detect any thing in thoſe books as falſe or forged, whoſe ſilence in this caſe is of great importance becauſe they were eye witneſſes of thoſe things which our Saviour taught, did and ſuffered, according as it was propheſied of him; ſo that they

knew

knew the propheſies, ſaw the accompliſhment of them, and were acquainted with that which the Apoſtles had written: Yea, many or moſt of the things relating to Chriſt and his Apoſtles, and the accompliſhment of propheſies, are mentioned and recorded in the writings of ſome heathen *Authors* that lived and wrote not long after thoſe times. If the Prophets and Apoſtles in their writings ſeem to *diſſent* one from another (for it is but a ſeeming, not a real diſſent) in any circumſtances, this derogates nothing from their Authority, for in themſelves they differ not, the fault is in our ignorance and miſapprehenſion; for by a right and juſt interpretation they may be eaſily reconciled; and that diſſonancy that ſeems to be amongſt them in ſmall things, doth free them from all ſuſpition of *fraud*; and their ſweet harmony and conſent in all matters of importance, may in *reaſon* convince us that they wrote by the guidance and direction of one and the ſame Spirit of truth. If they had all written one thing, they might ſeem ſuperfluous; if each had written a new *Hiſtory*, there could not have been ſuch a full harmony and agreement: when they relate the ſame ſtory with the ſame circumſtances, they have their uſe and benefit, one ſometimes ſpeaking more plainly then the other; and when they agree in matter, and only ſeem to diſſent in ſome circumſtances, the truth is the more confirmed, and an argument of fuller credit and certainty may be drawn out of that ſeeming diſſent: for as it is truly and wiſely obſerved, too exact diligence in every little circumſtance is neither approved by all, nor doth it want ſuſpition. There is in the holy *Scripture* (as a learned man writing in defence of their *Authority* ſaith) a *Majeſtick* kind of *ſecurity*, under many *ſeeming contradictions*,

dictions, which yet neither the *honour* of their *truth*, nor that *harmony* which they have in and *with themſelves*, do or ſhall at all *ſuffer* by: Nor do the *Scriptures* ſtand to *excuſe* and *purge* themſelves, as if there were any *cauſe* to ſuſpect them of any *contrariety* or *contradiction*; No, they *ſpeak* from *place* to *place*, whatever they have a *mind* to ſay, with that *liberty* and freedome as if there were *nothing* ſaid by them *elſewhere*, that either was like to *ſuffer* the leaſt *prejudice* by it, or to caſt the leaſt *prejudice* on it: To that ſweet agreement and conſent that is in the holy Scripture with it ſelf, we may further add, that it agreeth with all other truths whatſoever; there is nothing true in *Divinity*, which is falſe in true *Philoſophy*; nothing in *Philoſophy* is repugnant to the truth in Divinity, but it may be overthrown by the *principles* of right and true *Philoſophy*, which are and ought to be ſubject to Divinity. *Eightly*, The matter treated of in the Scripture is divine and wonderful, which may convince us that it is the word of the eternal God; it opens and reveals the greateſt and moſt glorious *Myſteries*, as the nature, properties, attributes and high acts of God, and how he will be worſhipped and adored: It deſcribes the *perſon*, natures, virtues and excellencies of *Chriſt*, ſo fully, ſo clearly, that if the mind of man conſider it attentively, he muſt of neceſſity acknowledge, that it doth far exceed the reach of a finite underſtanding and humane capacity; it diſcovers to us the corruption and miſery of man by nature, the great and unparalled love of God in Jeſus Chriſt towards loſt man, and the happy agreement of his infinite juſtice mercy and wiſdome in ordaining Chriſt to be our Mediator; and reveals the covenant of grace which God made with man after the fall, for reſtoring him

again

again to Gods favour: All which can be derived from no other fountain but the Spirit of wiſdome and Revelation, 1 *Cor.* 2. 7, 8, 9, 10. *Eph.* 1. 17, 18. The Scripture alſo contains the *law* of God, which teacheth the whole duty of man towards God and towards men: in the *precepts* of Scripture there are divers notes of a divine power and wiſdome, as Firſt, The ſurpaſſing excellency of the acts required of us, *namely*, that we ſhould deny our ſelves, and conform our hearts and lives to the Image of the word of God. Secondly, the wonderful equity that doth appear in every Commandment. Thirdly, The admirable ſtrangeneſs of ſome acts and duties, as regeneration, ſelf-abaſement, the renouncing of our own righteouſneſs, and parting with all we have for Chriſt, which a meer natural man would count fooliſhneſs and madneſs, yet preſcribed as neceſſary. Fourthly, The manner how obedience is required to be performed by us; it muſt proceed from an inward ſpiritual principle, even from a pure heart, a good Conſcience, and faith unfeigned. Fifthly, The perfection of the holy law of God, commanding and allowing all good, and forbidding and condemning all ſin and wickedneſs whatſoever, in thought, word, and action, not only the filthineſs of the fleſh, but alſo the filthineſs of the Spirit, and that with reference to all perſons, times and places without exception, binding the Conſcience, and reaching the very thoughts and ſecrets of the hearts of men. And do not all theſe things (which would fill a great Volume, if I ſhould treat of them at large) clearly and convincingly ſet forth the divine Authority of the Scriptures, ſo as we ſhould acknowledge no other Author of thoſe ſacred writings but God himſelf? for who can contrive theſe things but he who

is

is infinite in power and wiſdome? who can give eternal life, or inflict eternal death and condemnation by the word of his power, but the eternal God? *Ninthly*, The end of the Scriptures is divine, namely, the Glory of God and the Salvation of man, not ſo much Corporal and Temporal, as Spiritual and Eternal. The Doctrines, precepts, promiſes, prohibitions, narrations, threatnings, puniſhments and rewards thereof, are all referred finally and ultimately to the praiſe and glory of God, the ſupreme being and chiefeſt good, which ſhews plainly that they are divine and from above. And to ſpeak truth and reaſon, what is more equal and juſt then that all things ſhould return thither from whence they had their firſt riſe and Original? for of *him*, and through *him*, and to *him* are all *things*, to whom *everlaſting* glory is due from all Creatures, *Rom.* 11. 36. The Scripture plainly points out to man what true bleſſedneſs is, wherein it conſiſts, and where and how it is to be had and enjoyed, namely, in the everlaſting viſion and fruition of God in Heaven, which men may attain unto by the true knowledge of Chriſt, in whom God is reconciled and *well pleaſed:* And this is a firm and clear demonſtration of the divine Authority and excellencie of the Scriptures; for what is more agreeable to the wiſdome, bounty, mercy, goodneſs and power of God, then to reſtore man fallen, and to make him partaker of eternal bliſs and happineſs? and who can ſhew to man how he may be reſtored and admitted into the favour of God, having offended his glorious majeſty, who can direct and lead him in the way to true bliſs and happineſs, but God who is wiſdome and goodneſs it ſelf, and who hath effectually done it in and by his Son, the *eſſential* Word, and by the Scriptures

tures which are the written word of God? Theſe *Arguments* and demonſtrations, whether they be ſeverally or joyntly conſidered by us, do as ſtrongly prove and evince that the Chriſtian Religion is the only true Religion, and that the Scriptures are the word of God; as any reaſon can prove, that there was, is, and ought to be, any true Religion or Rule to walk by, in matters that concern Religion and the worſhip of the *Deity*; and therefore may ſerve to convince and ſatisfie the reaſon of any ſober man, touching the divine Authority of the Religion and Laws of Chriſt.

CHAP. XIII.

Of the Uſe *of* Reaſon *in the interpretation of* Scripture, *and judging of* Controverſies.

EVery Chriſtian ſhould ſo far improve his *Reaſon*, as not to be impos'd upon in matters of faith by the meer dictates of men; be they *Princes*, be they *Popes*, be they Councels, be they never ſo learned or pious, he ought not in *aliorum ſententias pedibus potius quam cordibus ire*: Reaſon and Judgment in theſe matters ſhould go before and make way for his practice. As there are ſome that vainly magnifie and lift up the *Reaſon* of man above the Spirit of God, in judging of the Authority and mind of God in the *Scriptures*, ſo there are others (and more eſpecially that *Beſtial* Antichriſtian Kingdome of the *Papacy*) that would transform reaſonable men and Chriſtians into ſenſitive and irrational Creatures, by the deceit and

Leger-

Legerdemain of a Popiſh Implicit credulity, which commands men to put out their Lamps, to pluck out their eyes, and in a manner to renounce their Senſes, Reaſon and underſtandings; and ſo to follow their leaders blindfold whereſoever they go. And I could wiſh there were not too much of this Implicit faith and blind devotion amongſt Proteſtants, yea and amongſt ſome that ſeem more forward and zealous, then others, at leaſt for a *party*. The Ranting *Romaniſts* tells us (with noiſe and clamour enough) of a viſible ſupreme Tribunal, and an infallible head of the Church here upon Earth, who is to regulate all perſons, and determine all controverſies, though never ſo much againſt the rules of Scripture and *Reaſon*: others of them more prudent and moderate, reſolve the final Judgment of Controverſies into the determination of a general *Council*; and all of them generally make the Authority of the Scriptures to depend wholly upon the judgment of their Church: Hence was that impudent ſaying of *Bayly* the *Jeſuite*, that without the *Authority* of the *Church* he would believe St. *Mathew* no more then *Titus Livius*, a Heathen *Author*. And *Stapleton* is ſo much for a *blind Implicit* obedience, in contempt of *Reaſon*, that he tells us plainly, the *people* are ſo *ſubjected* to the *Sentences* of their *Paſtors*, that if their *Paſtors* err in any thing, the *people* may and ought to *err* in *obedience* to them. And again, as the *Jews* were to *believe* Chriſt (ſaith he) ſo are we *ſimply* and in *every thing* to believe the *Church* of *Rome*, whether it teacheth *Truth* or *Error*. O monſtrous! Is not this a baſe Tyranny, a Brutiſh unreaſonable act of theirs, when they go about to make us believe that to be *white*, which we know to be *black*, that to be *true* which we know to be *falſe*? there

are

are ſome indeed amongſt them more *rational* and ſober, who would not have private Chriſtians put out their eyes, but make uſe of their *Reaſon* and Judgment in reading the Scriptures, and judging of Controverſies. The *examination* and trial of *Doctrines* concerning faith (ſaith *Gerſon*) belongeth not only to the *Pope* and *Councils*, but to every Chriſtian alſo, that is grounded in the knowledge of the *Scripture*, becauſe every *Chriſtian* is a fit *Judge* of that which he knoweth. And the ſaying of *Panormitan*, another of their *Doctors*, is well known, that *one faithful man*, though he be but a *private* man, is more to be *believed* then the *Pope* or a whole *Council*, if he have better *Reaſon* and Scripture *Authority* on his ſide. *Chriſoſtome* in anſwer to this *Objection*, that there are ſo many and ſo great diſſentions amongſt *Chriſtians*, that we know not of what opinion to be of, nor whom to believe, hath theſe *remarkable* words: *Tell* me, haſt thou any *Reaſon* or *Judgment*? for it is not the part of *a man* barely to *receive* whatſoever he *heareth*; but if thou *diligently* mark the *meaning*, thou mayſt *throughly know* that which is good; when thou *Buyeſt* a *Garment*, though thou haſt no skill in *weaving*, yet thou ſayeſt not, I cannot *buy it*, they *deceive* me, but thou doſt what thou *canſt* to come to the *true knowledge* of it; ſay not then I am no *Scholler*, and will be no *Judge*, I can *condemn* no *opinion*; for this is but a *ſhift* and a *cavil*, and therefore let us not *uſe* it, for theſe *things* are *eaſie* to them that *endeavour* after true knowledge. Hath not every Chriſtian a reaſonable Soul, an underſtanding faculty which God hath endued him with, that thereby he might ſearch and try and diſcern the things that differ? To what end hath God ſet up this *light* in mans Soul,

if

if he muſt not uſe it in ſearching the Scriptures and trying Doctrines, but muſt give way to Sloth and Ignorance? Is not this to transform man into a Beaſt and is it not Brutiſhneſs and folly in him thus to lay aſide his Reaſon and underſtanding, and to be wholly concluded by humane Authority and the names of *men* in matters of faith? As in other *points* the Church of *Rome* (which is made up of lyes and contradictions) would impoſe upon us, as if we had neither *Senſe* nor *Reaſon* in us, ſo more eſpecially in the point of *Tranſubſtantiation*, and the corporal carnal preſence of Chriſt in the Sacrament, which is againſt Senſe, againſt *Reaſon*, and againſt *Faith*. *Firſt*, It is againſt *Senſe*; now of all *demonſtrations* amongſt men, whereby we prove things of this kind, nothing is more firm, then that which is taken from *Senſe*. 'Tis an undoubted truth in *Divinity*, that in all matters of *Senſe*, Senſe is a compleat Judge, underſtanding it of objects proper and peculiar to *Senſe*; otherwiſe we ſay the *Eye* is not able to judge of *Sounds*, nor the *Ear* of *Colours*: Thus Chriſt when he would prove that he had a true and real *Body*, he ſends his Diſciples to their *Senſes*; a Spirit hath not fleſh and blood as you ſee me have. *Reach* hither thy hand, and *thruſt* it into my *Side*. In turning *water* into wine, *Senſe* might eaſily judge of the change; you would think it a ſtrange and incredible thing, if Chriſt ſhould have come to to the Maſter of the Feaſt, requiring him to believe it was *wine*, though he ſaw and taſted nothing but *water*; or if God ſhould have ſaid thus to *Moſes*, well, thou ſeeſt nothing but a *Rod*, yet thou muſt believe notwithſtanding that it is changed, and is really a *Serpent*: ſo in this caſe of the *Sacrament*, when all the *Senſes* tell us, it is *Bread* which we ſee, and touch, and

taſte; why ſhould any man be ſo fooliſh and vain, as to ſay with the *Papiſts* that the *Bread* ceaſeth to be truly Bread, and is *Tranſubſtantiated* into the *very* Body of Chriſt? Again *Secondly*, As this Doctrine is againſt *Senſe*, ſo it is againſt *Reaſon*, namely, that Chriſt ſhould be in Heaven, and have but one Body, and yet at the ſame have *Ten Thouſand* Bodies on Earth; that his *Body* ſhould be a true *Body* as ours is, and yet without *Circumſcription*, and other inſeparable *properties* of a true *Body*; that the ſubſtance of *Bread* ſhould be aboliſhed, ſo as it ſhall remain no longer *Bread*, and yet we find the very *quantity*, taſte, whiteneſs, *ſubſtance* and nouriſhing *vertue* of *Bread*. If you ask them after all this, whether it doth *nouriſh* the *Body* or no, they will tell you (with impudence enough) if they be true to their own principles, that it doth not *nouriſh*, quite contrary to *Reaſon* and experience: This *monſtruous* opinion of theirs, is ſo irrational and abſurd, that the moſt learned amongſt them are *puzled* and not ſatisfied therewith, but leave it as a miracle. I have taken ſome *pains* (ſaith a learned *judicious* man in his late Sermon againſt *Popery*) to conſider other *Religions* that have been in the *world*, and I muſt freely *declare* that I *never* yet in any of them, *met* with any *Article* or *Propoſition* impoſed upon the *belief* of men, half ſo *unreaſonable* and hard to be *believed*, as this point of *Tranſubſtantiation* is. *Thirdly*, As it is againſt *Senſe* and Reaſon, ſo it is againſt *Faith*, which though it be beyond Senſe or *Reaſon*, yet it is not contrary thereunto. Senſe and *Reaſon* are Gods works, as well as Grace and Faith: Now one work of God doth not *deſtroy* another, for if ſo, this would argue imperfection in the *workman*; faith feeds on Chriſt ſpiritually in the *Sacrament*, being

the

the *evidence* of things not ſeen; now if Chriſt be *corporally* preſent in the *Sacrament*, what need the receiver feed on him ſpiritually by faith, as being abſent; what need he do this in *remembrance* of him, till he come? let us in this and other things, ſhew our ſelves men, and not *Beaſts*; let us make a right uſe of our *Senſes*, and of that *Reaſon* which God hath beſtowed upon us. 'Tis we that believe and act in matters of Religion (whoever requires the ſame of us) theſe are our *Acts*; if therefore we will ſhew our ſelves to be men endued with *Reaſon* and underſtanding, we muſt *examine* what is propounded and offered to us, that ſo we may *aſſent* or diſſent upon judicious grounds; we are men, and ſhould do things as men; we are *Chriſtians*, and ſhould do things as Chriſtians. Blind faith and blind obedience ſhould be utterly Baniſhed out of Chriſtian *Aſſemblies*; nor ſhould we *pin* our faith upon any man or company of men (be they never ſo Godly and learned) for this were to wrong God, and to ſet man in his Throne, and attribute that to man, which is proper to God alone. Hereby alſo we exceedingly prejudice and wrong our own Souls, and are in danger of *Apoſtacie*, when we adhere to an opinion or way, of which we are not *rationally* and knowingly perſwaded that it is the way of God; what is this elſe but to comply with a way or party out of *faction* and partiality, not out of Judgment and *Conſcience*, which therefore cannot heve any true *Conſiſtence* or co nſtancy in it: They rather bring their feet then their hearts into a way of Religion, that adhere to it without due tryal and examination. Herein we ſhould uſe our own eyes and judgments, and not wholly truſt to others; Herein we ſhould diligently exerciſe our own *Reaſon*.

if we will judiciouſly and profitably receive the *truths* of God; not that we ſhould *judge* of the higheſt Goſpel myſteries according to natural *corrupt* Reaſon, but yet we ſhould make uſe of our own underſtandings and judgments, being enlightned by the Spirit and word of God, in comparing one thing with another, that ſo our faith and knowledge may not be fluctuating and uncertain, but ſteady and ſtable. It will perhaps be *objected*, that if every man may *judge* in matters of Religion according to his *Reaſon*, then ſo many men, ſo many *minds*, which will breed endleſs *confuſion*; every man pretends to *Reaſon*, and one man thinks his Reaſon to be as good or better than another mans, and ſo according to this opinion there ſhall be no order, no ſettlement in the Church. I confeſs there is much danger on this hand, eſpecially where people are running headlong into confuſion, and will not ſubmit to Eccleſiaſtical order and government, yet this ſhould not make men throw away their *Reaſon*, and believe with an *Implicite* faith only as the Church believes. In things of this nature there is a *twofold* judgment, a judgment in *foro externo* or *publico*, and a judgment in *foro interno* or *privato*: The former of theſe is an *Authoritative* judgment belonging to Chriſtian *Synods* and Counſels, duly and lawfully aſſembled, where the Chriſtian *Magiſtrate* preſides; ſuch Counſels debating and determining matters in difference, either as to doctrine or practice, have been of excellent uſe from time to time in the *Church* of God: But beſides this, there is belonging to every Chriſtian a judgment of *diſcretion* or diſcerning, a *rational* ſelf-*directive* judgment in the *Court* of his own Conſcience, and in reference to his own faith and *practice*; he ſhould ſo examine and judge of the things

things that relate thereunto, as to be fully *perſwaded* in his own *mind*, Rom. 14. 5, He ſhould ſo *prove* all things, as to *hold faſt* that which is *good*, 1 Theſ. 5. 21. Thus Chriſt in his infinite wiſdome, goodneſs and faithfulneſs, hath given two ſorts of judgment to his Church and people: One *publick* belonging to an Aſſembly of Godly Paſtors and Elders; for of that which the *Prophets* teach, let the *Prophets* judge, and the *Spirits* of the *Prophets* are ſubject to the *Prophets*. The other is a more private perſonal judgment, which concerns all the faithful who are to judge of what is taught, and to try the Spirits; *in* both theſe *judgments* we ſhould remember that Chriſt hath committed nothing to the Church but the *miniſtry* of giving judgment; for as touching the *Soveraignty* of Judgment and Authority, it belongs only to him. *Councels* may expound and declare the doctrine of the Scriptures, but they have no power from Chriſt to make any new Doctrines or Articles of faith. And every Chriſtian ought in a *rational* way to judge of their *determinations* according to the word of God, and not yeild blind obedience thereunto; for this were to unchriſtian, yea to *unman* himſelf. Of this opinion are all the Proteſtant *Churches* in general, and particularly the Church of *England* (*k.*) who maintains that every *ſound* member of the Church, hath *Authority* from Chriſt to judge in controverſies of faith, and ſo to imbrace truth, and avoid error.

(*k.*) *See* Rogers *on* 39. *Articles* P. 103.

The Church as a *faithful* witneſs, ſhould give Teſtimony of the Doctrine of Chriſt, but ought not to *judge* the word, nor to *judge* otherwiſe then Gods word judgeth. General *Councels* conſiſting of men

that are not infallible may err. The things therefore that are ordained by general *Councels*, do so far bind, as they are *Consonant* to the word of God, and no further; for we are not to ground our faith upon them, but only upon the Authority of Gods word. Now that such a *rational* judgment, or a judgment in *foro interno* (as hath been asserted) belongs to every Christian, so as he may and ought to make use of his Reason in judging of the Doctrines of Religion, and of Ecclesiastical Laws and *determinations*, is thus proved and demonstrated. *First*, From those plain *Texts* of Scripture, *Take heed* that no man *deceive* you, *Mat.* 24. 4. *Prove* all *things*, and *hold* that which is good, 1 *Thes.* 5. 21. Beloved, *believe* not every *Spirit*, but *try* the *Spirits* whether they are of God, 1 *Joh.* 4. 1. He that is *Spiritual* judgeth all things, yet he himself is *judged* of no man, 1 *Cor.* 2. 15. Which Texts, together with many other that might be alledged, do not only concern *publick* Ministers, but also private Christians, yea chiefly them, as being most in danger to be seduced. *Secondly*, This hath been also the approved practice of the *faithful* thus to search the Scriptures, and *try* the Spirits, and exercise their *Spiritual Senses*, that they might discern things that differ, *Heb.* 5. 14. The *Bereans* are counted more noble then others, because they searched the Scriptures, and tryed *Pauls* Doctrine by the Scriptures, though he spake from an *infallible* Spirit, *Acts* 17. 11. The Church at *Ephesus* is commended for *trying* them that said they were *Apostles*, and were not, and finding them *lyers* and deceivers after tryal, *Rev.* 2. 2. And Christ tells us, that his *true Sheep* will follow him, for they know his *voice*, but a stranger they will not follow, but will flee from him, *Joh.* 10. 4, 5.

Now

Now this they could not do, unleſs they did *exerciſe* a *rational* judgment in matters of faith. *Thirdly*, Every Chriſtian is to give an account of his faith and practice to God, yea he ſhould be alwayes ready to give an Anſwer to every man that asketh him a *Reaſon* of the hope which is in him, 1 *Pet.* 3. 15. But how can he do this rationally and underſtandingly, without tryal and examination? If he be found to embrace whatever his ſuperiors ſhall impoſe upon him, truly then the blind implicite faith of the *Collier*, will ſerve well enough. Is this according to the Scripture which tells us that we cannot truly believe, unleſs we have knowledge? That every man ſhould be perſwaded in his own *mind* concerning the things which he doth believe and practice, and that whatſoever is not of *faith* is ſin? *Fourthly*, How ſhall a Chriſtian *cleanſe* his heart and wayes, but by taking heed thereto, according to the word of God, *Pſal.* 119. 9. How ſhall he walk as a *Child* of light, unleſs the word be a *Lamp* to his feet, and a *light* to his paths? *Pſal.* 119. 105. How can he walk wiſely and *Circumſpectly* (as he ought to do) *underſtanding* what the will of God is, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Epheſ.* 5. 17. if we do not allow him a *judgment* of diſcretion, and diſcerning in matters of this nature, that ſo he may try Spirits and Doctrines. *Fifthly*, were it the duty of a private Chriſtian to receive all Doctrines that are propoſed to him by his *Superiors*, without tryal and examination; then could nothe be juſtly charged with ſin and guilt, who receiveth error in ſtead of truth, from thoſe that are above him in dignity and Authority; but we find that this will not excuſe him: If the *Blind* lead the *Blind*, both ſhall fall into the *pit*, *Luk.* 6. 39. and we are to fly from *Strangers*, and not hear-

ken to the words of thoſe *Prophets* that ſpeak the *viſions* of their own *hearts*, and not out of the mouth of the Lord, *Jer.* 23. 16. We muſt not believe every *Spirit*, but beware of *falſe* Prophets and Seducers, which no Chriſtian can avoid upon good *grounds*, unleſs he paſs a *rational* judgment upon them and their Doctrines. Why was *Ephraim oppreſſed* and broken in *judgment*, but becauſe he willingly *walked* after the *Commandment* of his Ruler and Governor, *corrupting* the worſhip of God, and did not impartially examine and *judge* of the ſame, by the *rule* of Gods word, *Hoſ.* 5. 11. *Sixthly*, God hath *furniſhed* a Chriſtian with abilities for this end; with *Reaſon*, as man, he hath a *reflexive* faculty which Beaſts have not; he hath a *rational* underſtanding Soul, which is the *Candle* of the Lord that enableth him to compare one thing with another, and to deduce *genuine* inferences and concluſions from ſuch premiſes as are laid down and propounded. And then further, God hath not only given his people the light of *humane* Reaſon and underſtanding as rational men, but hath alſo infus'd into them a principle of divine light and knowledge, as Chriſtians, to ſearch and try the Doctrines of Religion, whether they be true or falſe: God hath given them a Spiritual *unction* or underſtanding (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks 1 *John* 2. 27. & *Chap.* 5. 20.) that they may know him who is truth it ſelf; and they need not that any man teach them, but as this *anointing* teacheth them, which is truth, and is no lye. If any man have not the *Spirit* of Chriſt dwelling in him he is none of his. The *ſecret* of the Lord is with them that fear him; and to them it is given by the father to know the *myſteries* of the kingdome of God, *Mat.* 13. 11. Hereby (ſaith the Apoſtle) we *know* the

things

things that are freely given us of God, even by his *Spirit* which *ſearcheth* all things, yea the *deep* things of God, 1 *Cor.* 2. 10. For a man profeſſing the knowledge of Chriſt, to ſwallow down without tryal or conſideration all that he reads and hears (if it comes from a perſon that he admires) which yet is the practice not only of the blind *Papiſts*, but of many ſeeming zealous *Proteſtants* that are too much addicted to a party, *Non eſt opus virilis intelligentiæ, ſed puerilis inſciti æ*, this rather becomes the *ſimplicity* and ignorance of a *Child*, then the wiſdome and underſtanding of a *ſerious* Chriſtian. *Luther* ſpeaking of the blind *implicite* faith and obedience too of the Church of *Rome*, tells us that 'tis ſuch an *opinion* and practice as renders a man *Brutiſt*, and deprives him of *Reaſon* and man-hood; and for this *wicked opinion* and practice of theirs, *namely*, for exerciſing an *abſolute* dominion over the Faith and Conſciences of men; the *Roman* Prelates deſerve to be driven out of the number of the faithful, as *Wolves* and *Tyrants*. But what? ſhall every *private* Spirit (will you ſay) take this upon him? Is not this to judge his Judges, and to paſs Sentence upon his Superiors? To which we anſwer, that thoſe perſons (be they never ſo great and learned) judge of divine things by a *private* Spirit, who depend upon their own corrupt Reaſon and Fancy, and accordingly judge and determine; and not he, though but a *private* Chriſtian, that is taught of God, and judgeth of the points of Religion, by, and according to the word of God. Nor do we ſay that every *private* man is to judge by way of Authority, in *foro publico*; a publick Authoritative diſquiſition and tryal in matters of Religion, is one thing, and a private rational Chriſtian examination is another; 'tis one thing *judi-*

care,

care, to judge of mine own *acts*, and another thing *judicem agere* to act as a Judge: Indeed the *Spiritual* man judgeth all things, but how? not in a *juridical* Authoritative way, but only ſo far as concerns his calling and capacity, if he be a private Chriſtian. *Rational* judgment belongs to him, but *Magiſtratica* and Miniſterial judgment belongs to others that are in a more publick capacity and *office*. And therefore in this caſe he is to try and judge with much *modeſty* and humility, not raſhly and *headily*, as being ſelf-conceited, and leaning too much to his *own* underſtanding. Let him walk *orderly*, and keep his place and ſtation, giving due reſpect and reverence to Chriſtian *Magiſtrates*, and godly *Paſtors*, and ſubmitting to them in the Lord, *Heb.* 13. 7, 17. And this will be a means to preſerve the Church of Chriſt from Anarchy and Confuſion.

Thus we have ſhewed how the *Scriptures* may be proved by the light of *Reaſon* to be the word of God; and that every Chriſtian ought to *exerciſe* himſelf in ſearching the Scriptures, and judging of Doctrines; but yet we muſt *diſtinguiſh* between thoſe external *rational* Arguments which are brought to prove the *divine* Authority of the Scriptures, and the *internal* Teſtimony of the *Spirit* of God in the Scripture, which is the moſt clear, certain, *infallible*, publick Teſtimony, and of it ſelf worthy to be believed, for it is the Teſtimony of God himſelf. Hereof we ſhall treat more particularly in the following Chapter.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIV.

Of the Internal *Teſtimony of the* Spirit *of God, witneſſing the* divine Authority *of the Scripture.*

ALthough there are *rational* arguments (which have been already mentioned) to prove the Scriptures to be the word of God, yet the *inward* Teſtimony of the holy Ghoſt himſelf is neceſſary to aſſure us of the *divine* Authority thereof; which *Teſtimony* is better and more certain then all our *Reaſon*; for as God is a ſufficient witneſs of himſelf in his own word, ſo the hearts and Conſciences of men will never be fully ſatisfied that the Scriptures are by *divine* inſpiration, till the ſame be ſealed and confirmed to them by the *inward* Teſtimony of the Holy Ghoſt; till then they will be much in the *dark*, often doubting and wavering, notwithſtanding all other reaſons and proofs. (*l.*) We ſhould ſo *believe* the Scripture for it ſelf, and in regard of the *Teſtimony* of the Spirit of God witneſsing the ſame, as not to *ſubject* the divine Authority thereof, to our *Reaſons* and demonſtrations. When our underſtandings are once powerfully convinced and enlightned by the Spirit of God (which endited the holy Scriptures) then do we not believe by our own judgment or *Reaſon*, or other mens, that the Scripture is from God, and by *divine inſpiration*, but above all humane Reaſon and Judgment, we hold it moſt certain, even as if we beheld the

(*l.*) *Calv.* Inſtit. *Lib.* 1. *chap.* 7. S. 5.

the *majeſty* of God himſelf there preſent, *John* 4. 42. And having attained this, we ſeek not after *humane* Arguments to reſt our faith upon, but as a thing that admits of no doubt or *diſpute*, we take it for granted, and do fully *captivate* and ſubmit our Judgment and *Reaſon* to it; ſuch therefore is the *perſwaſion* of a true Spiritual Chriſtian of the Authority of God in the Scriptures (far different from other mens) as requireth no *humane Reaſon*; ſuch is his knowledge and certainty as hath the beſt *Reaſon* for it, even that wherein the mind more aſſuredly and ſtedfaſtly reſteth, then upon any humane *Teſtimonies* or Reaſons whatſoever. Such is the inward Spiritual experience of the power, and wiſdome, and goodneſs of God in the holy Scriptures, that if all the World ſhould oppoſe the ſame, yet he is fully reſolved to give credit and adhere thereunto. By nature every man is blind in Spiritual things, and ignorant of the mind and myſteries of God; and therefore though the Scripture be a ſhining light in it ſelf, yet unleſs our underſtandings be opened and enlightned we cannot behold it, no more then a blind man can ſee the *Sun* when it ſhineth. The *Spirit* of God is the Author of *ſupernatural* light and faith; by the inſpiration thereof, were the Scriptures *firſt* written; the ſecrets and myſteries of God are fully known unto, and effectually revealed by this Spirit. The ſame law and word which is written in the Scriptures, this Spirit doth alſo write and *impreſs* upon the hearts of them that are endued therewith; and therefore the Teſtimony of this Spirit, where it comes in power, muſt needs fully perſwade and aſſure the heart and Conſcience of a Chriſtian, that the Scripture is the *infallible* word of God. As in other *Sciences*, there are alwayes

wayes ſome principles, *per ſe nota & indemonſtrabilia*, whence other things are proved and demonſtrated; ſo it is in Divinity, which is the moſt excellent Science, all *concluſions* in point of faith and practice are proved by the Scriptures; but as for the Scriptures they prove and evidence themſelves ſufficiently to the judgment of every true Chriſtian, by their own light manifeſting their *divine* Original. They are *primum viſibile*, not like *colour* that cannot be ſeen till light make it apparent; but like *light* it ſelf, which maketh all other things manifeſt, and it ſelf too, by its own proper quality. Now then if a true believer ſhould be *ask'd*, why he believes the *Articles* of the Chriſtian Religion, he may truly anſwer thus, becauſe they are revealed in the holy Scriptures: If it be further demanded, how he can aſſure himſelf that the Scriptures are the word of God, he may anſwer that he knows it by the Scriptures themſelves; the Spirit of God *enlightning* his underſtanding to ſee thoſe *lively* characters of *divine* truth which are imprinted upon thoſe ſacred *Volumes*: If yet it be further demanded how he knows whether that is the right meaning of ſuch or ſuch a place of Scripture, he may likewiſe truly ſay that he knows it by the *Scriptures*, which being diligently examined and compared together, do plainly diſcover to the humble teachable Soul their own true ſenſe and meaning in the things which concern everlaſting Salvation. And thus the *faith* of a Chriſtian is *finally* and ultimately reſolved into the infallible word of God, or a divine Teſtimony, and into nothing leſs. As for the Authority and *Teſtimony* of the Church, and the judgments and writings of the Godly learned, they are good helps to make us ſee the *Truth*, but no *cauſes* why we believe it; this we

do

do for its own ſake, not for their ſayings or *determinations*, which if they do not *accord* with the Scriptures, we ought not to aſſent thereunto: Though we ſhould give due *Reverence* to the Aſſemblies of Godly judicious men, and thoroughly examine and weigh with humility and ſelf-denyal, the grounds of our diſſent from them, yet the bare *Authority* of men, though never ſo eminent for learning and piety, ſhould not command our aſſent to any *Article* of Religion that ſhall be propoſed to us: For our faith ſhould not ſtand in the wiſdome of men (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks) but in the *power* of God, and the *Teſtimony* and *demonſtration* of his Spirit, *1 Cor.* 2. 4, 5. The *firſt* and chiefeſt ground whereon is built the certainty of faith's *aſſent*, is the infallible truth and Authority of *divine* Revelation; becauſe God hath ſaid it, we are to believe it, and aſſent to it, for whatſoever God ſaith is true; now this is a principle of Nature and Reaſon, which is deeply ingraven into the heart and Conſcience of every *Rational* man; that God himſelf is ſo infinitely wiſe, that he can be ignorant of nothing, nor can any Creature circumvent and over-reach him; and withal he is ſo *infinitely* good, holy, and juſt, that no lye or untruth can proceed from him; *wiſdome* it ſelf cannot be deceived, *truth* it ſelf cannot deceive, and God is both: And therefore whereſoever any Revelation is certainly known or believed to be of God, there the reaſonable Creature doth fully aſſent to the truth of things revealed. But now the *great* queſtion will be, how we know infallibly that God is the Author of the Scriptures, and that what we find written therein is of divine inſpiration, the very *Oracles* of God? Here lyes the great, yea the irreconcileable difference

rence between the Church of *Rome* and us; for whereas we maintain (according to the truth) that the Scriptures are known to be of God, by themſelves, and by their own light and power; they hold that we cannot be certain of their divine Authority, but by the *Teſtimony* of the *Church*, which as they ſay, doth infallibly propoſe unto us what is to be believed, and what is not to be believed: And ſo by this means our faith ſhall be reſolved, either into nothing at all (for they differ exceedingly about the Church *repreſentative*, and the ſupreme *Judge* of controverſies here on Earth) or at the furtheſt it ſhall be reſolved but only into *humane* Authority, and ſo ſhall be but a humane faith. That *Circle* which they falſly charge upon us (*m.*) they themſelves are guilty of, and can never be diſ-intangled therefrom, by their Principles: For ask a *Romaniſt*, why do you believe that the *Pope* cannot *err*, he will tell you becauſe the Scripture ſaith ſo, thou art *Peter*, and upon this *Rock* will I *build* my Church; and I have prayed that thy *faith* may not *fail:* and the like *Texts* of Scripture: But how know you that this is the infallible word of God, and that your *interpretation* is the right ſence and meaning of theſe places? To this he anſwers, becauſe the *Pope* and the Councel of *Trent* ſay ſo; or as ſome of them hold, becauſe the *Pope* only ſaith ſo; or as others of them, becauſe a general *Councel* ſaith ſo. If we further urge him, yea, but how know you infallibly that the *Pope* and Councel do not *err* in ſaying ſo? he will *anſwer* you, becauſe the Scripture affirms they cannot err, for thou art *Peter*, and upon this Rock will I build my Church, *&c.* And thus they run round in

(*m.*) Mr. *W.* Pemble *nature and properties of* grace *and faith*, P. 210, 211.

in a *Circle* (*n.*) and are ſo intangled that the wiſeſt and moſt learned of them know not how to deliver themſelves. Indeed they *accuſe* us with open mouth, as if we were intangled in a *Circle* running *round*, from the Scriptures to the Spirit, and again from the Spirit to the Scriptures; as thus, how know you the *Scriptures* to be the word of God? by the Spirit revealing the ſame to my heart and Conſcience: but how know you this *Revelation* of the Spirit to be true? By the *Scriptures*, which teſtifie, that the ſecret of the Lord is *revealed* to them that fear him: But then *further*, how know you this and the like places of Scripture to be the word of God? we know it by the Spirit, which reveals to us the things that are freely given us of God. And thus they pretend that they have *caught* us in a *Circle*; but they greatly miſtake us (though we do not miſtake their Doctrine) we teach indeed that we know the Scriptures infallibly to be the word of God, by the Spirit of God, *inwardly* revealing and teſtifying the truth of them to our *Conſciences*: But what kind of Revelation or Teſtimony is this? It is not any inward ſuggeſtion or *immediate* inſpiration, different from thoſe Revelations of *Divine* truth, that are in the Scriptures themſelves, as if the Spirit of God did by a ſecond private *immediate* Revelation, aſſure me of the truth of thoſe former Revelations contained in the Scriptures; we have no warrant for this in an *ordinary* way; but the Spirit of God reveals and teſtifies to our Conſciences, the divine Authority and truth of the Scriptures, by removing thoſe impediments that hindred, as *namely*, our ignorance and unbelief, and by beſtowing upon us thoſe graces that make us capable of this Divine knowledge and aſſurance, *illuminating* our

(*n.*) *The* Popiſh *circle deſcribed.*

underſtanding, renewing our wills, and ſanctifying our hearts and affections: In which ſence the Spirit of God in the Scripture is to us a Spirit of Wiſdom and Revelation, opening the eyes of our underſtandings, that we may ſee by a ſpiritual light the excellency of thoſe divine Myſteries that are in the Word of God, *Epheſ.* 1. 17, 18. Now this Doctrine of ours is no ſuch *Circle* as the *Papiſts* pretend it to be, but a plain and ſtrait way for a ſober Chriſtian to walk in: Thus, How know you that the Scriptures are Gods Word? We anſwer, By the Scriptures themſelves; by that wonderful light and excellency of truth and holineſs that ſhineth in them; here we would reſt, and go no further. But yet if we be asked, How we come to ſee this light? We anſwer, It is by the only work of the Spirit of God, giving us eyes to ſee, and hearts to embrace and love the light. If we be further urged (for ſome are thus importunate) But how know you that you do indeed perceive ſuch a *heavenly* light as you ſpeak of? Or how can you make it appear to others, that you are not deceived? Now truly this is but a vain queſtion, it being an abſurd thing to demand a *reaſon* of ſenſe; which is as if one ſhould ask him that gazeth on the *Sun*, How know you that you ſee the light? Why, he is certain that he ſees it, and knows that he is not deceived, though he cannot convince a *blind* man of it; and if in caſe he that is blind requires him that ſees to prove unto him by *ſound* argument, that he beholds ſuch an object, he demands an impoſſible thing of him, unleſs he could give him eyes to ſee it. Some of the moſt learned *Papiſts*, after all their diſputing and wrangling, are driven at laſt to acknowledge this inward illumination and teſtimony of the Spirit of

God: *Stapleton* himſelf, even in that Book where he defends the Authority of the Church, ſaith, *That the godly are brought to faith by the voice of the Church, but being once brought and enlightened with the light of divine Inſpiration, then they believe no more for the Churches voice, but becauſe of the heavenly light.* And again, in the laſt Book that ever he wrote againſt learned *Whitaker*, he tells us plainly, That *the inward perſwaſion of the holy Ghoſt is ſo neceſſary and effectual for the believing of every object of faith, that without it, neither can any thing by any man be believed, though the Church teſtified with it a thouſand times, and by it alone any matter may be believed though the Church held her peace or were never heard.* Hereby it appears, that we may be *infallibly* aſſured of the divine Authority of the Scriptures, though the Authority and *teſtimony* of the Church be not ſo regarded by us as the *Papiſts* would have it. But yet when we have to do with *Infidels* and *Atheiſts*, that ſcoff at this divine light and inward teſtimony of the Spirit, we have more *Reaſon* on our ſide (as hath been ſhewed at large) to convince them, and to prove that the Chriſtian Religion is the true Religion, and that the Scriptures do contain the Word and Laws of the moſt high God, then any other *Religion*, nay then all other *Religions in the world.* As for the *inward* teſtimony of the Spirit witneſſing the divine authority of the Scripture, and how it is to be conſidered, take theſe following *Rules* * for preventing miſtakes.

* *Rules concerning the Spirits teſtimony.*

First, That the Spirit of God doth aſſuredly perſwade the *Conſcience* of a Chriſtian, that the Scriptures are the Word of God, not by an *immediate* Viſion or Revelation, under which pre-

tence

tence Satan (transforming himſelf into an *Angel* of light) hath deluded and enſnared many poor ſouls, but by enlightening the eyes of our underſtanding to behold the light, writing the Law in our hearts and inward parts (as God hath promiſed in the new Covenant) *ſealing* up the Promiſes to our ſouls, and cauſing us experimentally to feel the powerful effects thereof.

Secondly, This divine ſupernatural *perſwaſion* wrought in Believers by the Spirit of God, is more certain and more ſatisfactory then can be proved by our weak imperfect *Reaſon*, or expreſſed in words; for things doubtful may be proved; but as for things that are in themſelves moſt clear and certain, we ſay, they need no rational proof or demonſtration; as the ſhining of the Sun (which diſcovers it ſelf by its own light) needs not be confirmed by any rational Arguments to him that hath his eyes open to ſee the light thereof.

Thirdly, It is ſuch a teſtimony and *demonſtration* of the divine Authority of the Scriptures, as is certain and manifeſt to him that hath the Spirit, for it makes it ſelf evident where it comes; but this is private and particular (not publick and common) teſtifying only to him who is endued therewith, but not convincing others, nor confirming doctrines to them: In this caſe men muſt have recourſe to the *viſible* ſtanding Rule, to the written Law and Teſtimony, if any man ſpeak not according to this (let him pretend never ſo much to the *inward* teſtimony and *revelation* of the Spirit) it is becauſe the light and truth of God is not in him.

Fourthly, This teſtimony of the Spirit therefore is not to be *ſevered* from the Word, which is the Inſtru-

ment of the holy Ghoſt, and his *publick* authentick teſtimony: Nor is it injurious to the Spirit of God to be tried by the Word, ſeeing there is a mutual *relation* and correſpondence between the truth of the party witneſſing, and the truth of the thing witneſſed: And this holy Spirit, the Author of the Scriptures, is every where like unto, and doth every where agree with himſelf: as it is in a pair of *Indentures*, there is no difference at all between them, but the very ſame things that are mentioned in the one, are alſo mentioned in the other; ſo it is between the Spirit *revealing*, and the truths of God *revealed* in the Scriptures.

Fifthly, The teſtimony of the Spirit doth not teach or aſſure all and every one of the *letters*, *ſyllables*, and *words* of the Scriptures (which are only as a *veſſel* to carry and convey the heavenly light unto us) but it doth *ſeal* in our hearts the *ſaving* truth contained in thoſe ſacred Writings, into what language ſoever they be *tranſlated*: Hence it is that the Apoſtle tells the *Corinthians*, that they *are the Epiſtle of Chriſt, written not with Ink, but with the Spirit of the living* God; *not in Tables of ſtone, but in the fleſhly Tables of the heart*, 2 Cor. 3. 3.

Sixthly and laſtly, The Spirit of God doth not lead them, in whom he dwelleth and witneſſeth, *abſolutely*, and at once, into every truth of God, ſo as utterly to *diſpel* all ignorance and darkneſs out of the ſoul; but he leadeth them into all truth *neceſſary* to ſalvation, and by *degrees*, *John* 16. 12, 13. Being a *free* voluntary Agent, he worketh when, and where, and in what meaſure he pleaſeth; ſo that holy men, partakers of the ſame Spirit in ſeveral degrees, may err and miſtake in ſome things, and diſ-

ſent

ſent one from another in matters that are not *fundamental.*

And thus we have given you ſome *Rules* to prevent miſtakes touching the *inward* teſtimony and revelation of the Spirit of God. It will not be amiſs now to reflect a little (yet without any rankor or bitterneſs againſt the perſons of men) upon their opinion that derogate from the Spirit of God and *divine* revelation, and ſet up *Reaſon* as a *Judge* in matters of Religion, and ſo reſolve their *Faith* finally into *Reaſon.*

CHAP. XV.

Briefly ſhewing *when* Reaſon *is rightly uſed, and when abuſed to the* prejudice *of the* Spirits *Teſtimony in the* Scripture.

NO diſcreet rational man will deny the uſe of Reaſon, in judging matters Civil and Religious, in the ſence formerly declared and proved: If you will ſhew your ſelf a man and not a beaſt, a judicious underſtanding Chriſtian, and not a Child in knowledge and judgment, then you muſt make uſe of your Reaſon in examining thoſe matters that are propounded to you, whether Civil or Religious; but yet if you admit Reaſon to be the only Rule or Standard to meaſure the Myſteries of *Faith* by, and to judge of and comprehend the moſt *divine* ſupernatural Doctrines and Truths of Chriſt, then you aſcribe too much to Reaſon, and too little to the Spirit of

God and Faith: *Eye hath not ſeen, nor ear heard,* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *neither have entred into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him: And as none know the things of a man ſave the ſpirit of a man which is in him; even ſo the things of God knoweth no man but the Spirit of God,* 1 Cor. 2. 9; 11. The rational Creature is a competent Judge of things meerly rational; but the ſpiritual man only (in whom the Spirit of God dwelleth) can rightly and ſpiritually diſcern and judge of things that are meerly ſpiritual and ſupernatural; and therefore we muſt take heed that we confound not the Spirit and Faith of the Goſpel with our natural Reaſon, nor prejudice the divine Authority of the Scriptures, by aſcribing too much to Reaſon, as we ought not to take from Reaſon that which is due to her in reference to divine matters.

Firſt, Then we acknowledge that Reaſon is the eye of mans Soul, or that Organ which lets into his Soul that divine light and teſtimony of God which begets Faith, and upon which Faith doth reſt it ſelf, and into which it is finally reſolved: *Reaſon* is not the object on which our Faith reſteth, but that faculty which being ſanctified takes in the light of Faith, which leads us to Chriſt, and the things that are heavenly and ſupernatural. The judgment and determination of the Word of God, *inſpired* by the Spirit of God, is that wherein we finally reſt, as the rule of our Faith; and the light of divine Underſtanding and Reaſon ſanctified, is that whereby a Chriſtian judgeth of *ſpiritual* things. God in his Word ſpeaks to reaſonable Creatures (not to brute beaſts) who by way of diſcourſe weighing what goes before, and what follows the Text, and comparing Scripture

wit

with Scripture, do come to a right underſtanding of the will and mind of God; therefore we are commanded as men that have reaſon in us to ſearch the Scriptures, to try the Spirits, and to judge what the Apoſtles ſay: Theſe are *acts* of Reaſon and Judgment, by the help whereof we are enabled to give a ſober rational account of our own Faith, and to convince the Adverſaries and gain-ſayers. If you be to deal with an Adverſary that hates the Chriſtian Religion, how can you think to perſwade him to Chriſtianity, unleſs you ſhew him a *reaſon* (as indeed the Chriſtian Religion is the wiſeſt and moſt rational Religion) If you ſay, your Church is the true Church, you muſt give a reaſon for it, or elſe no diſcreet man will believe you, ſeeing many pretend to the true Church that do not belong to it. If you urge a Scripture for your opinion, ſober men will rationally judge, whether it be agreeable to your ſence and interpretation, or not; and accordingly will embrace or reject your opinion. It concerns every man, as he tenders the peace and ſalvation of his own ſoul, to be certain of the truth of his Religion; And ſeeing there are ſo many opinions, and ſuch variety of perſwaſions in the world touching matters of *Religion*, we ought to conſider which perſwaſion hath the beſt and ſureſt grounds for it, that we may with peace and ſafety venture our ſouls upon it: Now this we cannot well do unleſs we make uſe of our *Reaſon*, in comparing one thing with another, that we may embrace the truth and reject error.

Secondly, Though there are myſteries of Faith which Reaſon cannot comprehend, yea, in their proper nature they are contrary to the dictates of natural Reaſon; *Ex nihilo nihil fit*, ſaith Reaſon, and *Ex*

nihilo omnia fiunt, ſaith Faith: The dead cannot return again to life, ſaith *Reaſon*; Thy dead bones ſhall live again, and this *mortality* ſhall put on *immortality*, ſaith Faith: yet the rational Soul of man being overpower'd and acted by a higher principle, even by the Spirit of God, ſees the greateſt reaſon in the world to believe theſe and all other divine ſupernatural myſteries and truths, becauſe the Scripture revealeth them to be of God, and from God: Is it not meet, and reaſonable, and well becoming us that are rational Creatures, to believe the God of Truth ſpeaking to us in his Word, though what he ſpeaks ſeem never ſo unreaſonable, never ſo contrary to fleſh and blood? Yet Reaſon will tell us this, That all that God ſpeaks (for from this pure Fountain can proceed nothing but pure ſtreams) is true and good, divine and heavenly, whatever our corruption ſaith to the contrary: So then, our Faith muſt be reſolved into the divine truth and authority of Gods Word, and our Reaſon captivated and ſubjected unto this higher principle, to believe what we find revealed in the Scriptures, becauſe it is revealed, and comes from the God of truth that cannot lye.

Thirdly, As I have reaſon to believe all that God ſpeaks in general, as being the God of truth; ſo I have reaſon alſo to believe in particular, that the doctrine of Scripture is Gods revealed Mind and Will: Nor is it ſufficient to a well-grounded Faith for a man to ſay he believes all that God reveals to be true; but he muſt alſo believe, that the myſteries contained in the holy Scriptures are the things which God hath revealed for his ſalvation: 'Tis true (according to the Judgment of our *Divines*) that Faith may rightly be ſaid to be a *firm* aſſent, without evidence

dence of many things in themſelves which we do believe; but yet the *medium*, by force whereof we are drawn to believe, muſt be evident unto us: As now if I be asked by an enemy of the Chriſtian Religion, Why I believe the Incarnation, Death and Reſurrection of Chriſt? I anſwer, Becauſe Gods Word teſtifieth of them as things moſt certain and true. If he ask me further, How know you that God hath revealed theſe things? I anſwer, By infallible ſigns and teſtimonies from Heaven, beyond all humane power, as hath been ſhewed *Chap.* 12. of this *Treatiſe*; by which mans reaſon may be convinced that thoſe writings are of God; and ſo I can prove that a Chriſtian hath more reaſon for his Religion then any other, whether *Jew*, or *Turk*, or *Heathen*.

Fourthly, Though in theſe reſpects that have been mentioned our *Reaſon* may be of very good uſe in reference to ſpiritual and divine things, yet we muſt not make our Reaſon the rule and meaſure of our Faith in matters that are beyond our Reaſon: As for example, there is a *Trinity* of Perſons in the Godhead, as the *Scripture* aſſures us, *Matth.* 28. 19. 1 *John* 5. 7. Shall I now reject this great Myſtery, becauſe it correſponds not with the dictates of my Reaſon and Underſtanding, and ſay with thoſe ſelf-will'd *Socinians*, that becauſe it is impoſſible to *Reaſon* that *three* ſhould be one God, therefore I will not believe this great Truth: But only interpret it thus, that theſe *three* agree in one, and are one by conſent of minds and wills, for ſo a thouſand men may be one? And again, If becauſe I cannot conceive or comprehend by my Reaſon, how *Chriſt* and his *Father* can be one in ſubſtance and eſſence, therefore I will find

our

out another interpretation which may agree with my Reaſon, though it be contrary to the mind of God in the Scriptures, and to the Articles of the Chriſtian Faith: Truly this is to ſet *Reaſon* in the Chair, or Throne, above the Spirit of God in the Scriptures; and ſo the ſacred Scripture, or Divine teſtimony, ſhall vail Bonnet to our Senſe and Reaſon, and not we to the Authority of God in his Word. Now this is the practice of curious proud Wits, who will not believe any thing, be it never ſo ſublime and myſterious, unleſs forſooth it be made evident to their ſhallow underſtandings. Hence it is, that they conſult with the dictates of *Reaſon* about the chiefeſt Articles of Faith, and accordingly expound them, or rather pervert them, denying and rejecting the *Perſon* and *Offices* of *Chriſt*, the Doctrine of *ſatisfaction* and *propitiation* by Chriſt, the Reſurrection of the ſame *Individual* body, the *abſolute* Decrees of God, and other Myſteries of the like nature; and ſo at length God leaving them to their own vain reaſonings, and the wicked *imaginations* of their own hearts, they become meer *Atheiſts*. Indeed every Chriſtian, as hath been ſaid, ought to give a *Reaſon* of the Faith and Hope that is in him; but we muſt put a difference between giving a reaſon of our believing, and a reaſon of the thing believed. I believe the Doctrine of the Trinity, That Chriſt is *conſubſtantial* and *coeſſential* with the Father, that he was incarnate, and born of a Virgin, that *Jacob* was loved and *Eſau* rejected, before they had done either good or evil; and the reaſon and ground of my belief is, becauſe the ſame is written in the infallible Word of God. But now to demonſtrate and evidence theſe high Truths and Myſteries to humane

Reaſon,

Reaſon, from the nature of things, or otherwiſe to disbelieve them, this is a courſe deſtructive to the Chriſtian Faith and Religion. There are ſome things that are evident in themſelves, as the Principles of *Geometry*, that every *whole* and entire thing is bigger then a part of it, and the like: But then there are other things that are not evident in themſelves, but are revealed and made known to us, both that they are, and what they are by a forreign *medium*, without the compaſs of the things themſelves: Of this ſort are all thoſe things which we are perſwaded of by the *report* of others; and this is that *certainty* of knowledge which we have of things that are *believed*, the truth of which in themſelves appeareth not to us, nor is ſeen of us: And in this reſpect Faith is truly ſaid to be an aſſent without *evidence* upon the credit of the *Revealer*: In theſe things our *Reaſon* reacheth but the τὸ ὅτι, that ſuch things are the Truth of God, but the διὰ τί is hid from us, we cannot ſhew a reaſon how ſuch things ſhould be. Thus to tye our Faith to Reaſon, and form our belief by the dictates of reaſon, ſo as to refuſe to believe any thing without evidence from the nature of the thing it ſelf demonſtrated and made known to our Reaſon, argues much pride and ſelf-confidence, ſetting up our Reaſon above the Will of God * revealed, and arraigning the ſacred Scriptures at the Bar of our *Reaſon*. Now this is not to be admitted, but to be rejected by all Chriſtians, and that upon theſe Grounds and Conſiderations.

* *Againſt ſubjecting the Scripture to Reaſon.*

Firſt, Becauſe our Reaſon and Underſtandings are but weak and ſhallow in the knowledge of the Myſteries of Nature, and we are much more ignorant and

and blind in the myſteries of Grace, and in things that are divine and ſupernatural, *John* 1. 5. 1 *Cor.* 1. 19, 20. 1 *Cor.* 2. 11, 14. 1 *Cor.* 13. 12. When the world by all its *wiſdom* and *reaſon* knew not God in Chriſt, *It pleaſed God* (ſaith the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 1. 21.) *by the fooliſhneſs of preaching to ſave them that believe*: Yea, not only in the men of the world, but in the moſt eminent Saints, there is ſtill much blindneſs in their underſtandings, and much perverſeneſs in their wills, and in the reaſonings of their hearts againſt the Truths of God: Now theſe vain, and carnal, and fooliſh *reaſonings* of ours ſhould be regulated and corrected by the Word of God. Mans Reaſon ſhould not preſume to regulate the Word, but the Word of God ſhould regulate and correct mans *Reaſon*. The Word is the rule, and not our Reaſon; for that which is to be *regulated*, cannot be the *rule* to regulate.

Secondly, To bring Scripture to the *Bar* of our Reaſon, and ſo make Reaſon the *Judge* in divine myſteries, is exceeding prepoſterous, for this were to *ſubordinate* and make ſubject that which is much *ſuperiour* to that which is far *inferiour*; that which is perfect and without error, to that which is imperfect and erroneous. Now certainly that which is weak and corrupt is not fit to judge that which is holy and perfect; nor is that which is ſubject to errors and miſtakes (as mans Reaſon is) fit to regulate and judge the Word of God, which is all *light*, and all *truth*, and is profitable for *doctrine*, for *reproof*, for *correction*, for *inſtruction* in *righteouſneſs*, that the man of God may be *perfect*, throughly furniſhed unto all good works, 2 *Tim.* 3. 16, 17. As

John

John the Baptiſt ſaid to Chriſt, (*n*) *I have need to be baptized of thee; and comeſt thou to me, that am far thy inferiour?* So may our *Reaſon* ſay to the bleſſed Word of God, I am far inferiour to thee, and have need to be *regulated* and *reformed* by thee, and comeſt thou to me? No, no, it is my greateſt honour to ſubmit my ſelf to thee and thy Divine Authority.

(n) *Mr.* Lyford *on* Heb. 5. 13, 14. cap. 1. pag. 28.

Thirdly, Upon this ground alſo mans Reaſon is denyed to be the Rule and Judge in matters of Faith, becauſe one man cannot prove infallibly to another man, that his Reaſon is the right Reaſon in ſuch a caſe: He pretends Reaſon, ſo do I: A third man comes and pretends to as much Reaſon as either of us; and experience ſhews, that divers men, yea, good men, have different Reaſons, and different apprehenſions in many points of Religion: Nor can a man be certain, that this or that is the true meaning of a Text, if he have nothing to aſſure him thereof, but the appearance and probability of his own Reaſon, for others that differ from him think they have, and may really have, as much or more Reaſon on their ſide then he: Indeed if we compare our own Reaſon with the Reaſon and Authority of other men which have decreed thus and thus, then muſt we give the *prehemiuence* to our own Reaſon, when a clearer evidence is propounded and preſented to our Reaſon; for every one is to judge for himſelf with a judgment of diſcretion and diſcerning (as hath been formerly proved) and 'tis unreaſonable and abſurd for a man to aſſent to a leſſer evidence, when a clearer evidence is propounded to him. 'Tis true there are not many that are well able to judge for themſelves

in

in the Controverſies of Religion, and therefore God hath provided ſpiritual Guides and Shepherds to go before them and help them; but yet Chriſtians muſt not reſign up their wits and ſenſes to follow them where-ever they go; if they would lead us blindfold, we ſhould not put out our eyes to follow them, but ſhould rationally and impartially weigh and conſider the grounds of their doctrine and practice. Doth ſuch a godly learned man tell you that this is firm ground, you may go ſafe upon it? And do you ſee it to be ſo by the eye of your Reaſon, enlightened by the Spirit of God? Then you may follow him as a man of judgment and underſtanding, and not like a beaſt, that is led he knows not whither; and herein you have the advantage of his Reaſon and of your own too.

CHAP. XVI.

Of the difference *between the* meer rational *and* ſpiritual men, *and their knowledge and acts about* ſpiritual *things.*

THe light of Reaſon ſhould be made uſe of and improved by every Chriſtian in ſearching the Scriptures, and trying Spirits and Doctrines, yet ſo, as we muſt not confound the principles, knowledge, and operations of the natural man, or meer rational man, with the principles, knowledge, and operations of the ſpiritual man. There is a twofold knowledge of ſpiritual things, a natural or rational knowledge, and a ſpiritual and ſupernatural knowledge. The

The former is but Hiſtorical, as when a man reads of ſuch a Country in a Hiſtory, or ſees it only in a Map at a great diſtance, but was never there himſelf to take a full view of it, and report the things that are there of his own certain knowledge. The latter kind of knowledge is intuitive, or a knowledge of ſpiritual viſion, beholding the things themſelves in the light of Gods Spirit diſtinctly and at hand. No Creature or created thing can go beyond its ſphere, or comprehend that which is beyond its capacity: The *vegetative* creature cannot reach ſo far as the *ſenſitive*, nor the *ſenſitive* ſo far as the *rational*; nor can the meer *rational creature* comprehend that which the *ſpiritual man* doth. Such as are alive to God, and have ſpiritual union and conjunction with Chriſt the ſecond *Adam*, the quickening Spirit, live and act from a higher principle, and in another kind then meer natural or rational men do. The ſoul of the natural man acts his body; and the more he improves the light of reaſon, the more rational and conſiderate he is in his actings and operations: But the ſoul of the ſpiritual man is under the power of Gods Spirit, and the glorious operations thereof; and as far as Gods Spirit is above the ſpirit of man, ſo far is the life of Grace, or the life of the ſpiritual man, above that of Nature. *'Tis true* (ſaith *Luther*) (o) *that I live in the fleſh, but this life, whatever it is, I eſteem as no life, for indeed it is no true life, but a ſhadow of life under that which another liveth, that is to ſay,* Chriſt, *who is my true ſpiritual life, which life thou ſeeſt not, but only heareſt, and I feel; as thou heareſt the wind, but knoweſt not from whence it comes, or whither it goes, even ſo thou ſeeſt me ſpeaking, eating,*

(o) Luth. *Com. on* Gal. *cap.* 2. *v.* 20.

ing, walking, ſleeping, and doing other things as other men do, and yet thou ſeeſt not my true life. This ſpiritual life, which far tranſcends the meer natural or rational life, muſt be diſcerned ſpiritually; the ſpiritual man hath a *white ſtone*, in which his name is written, which none can read but himſelf: He is the Son of God, an Heir of Heaven, therefore the world knows him not, even as we know not the Sons of *Princes* (were they amongſt us) who dwell in *Countreys* far remote from us; but his life, which now is hid with Chriſt in God, ſhall fully appear when Chriſt appears in glory, *Col.* 3. 3, 4.

Firſt, Then the ſpiritual man hath Chriſt formed in him by the holy Ghoſt, Chriſt is in him the hope of glory, and he lives the life of Chriſt (which a meer rational man doth not) there is a ſpiritual ſupernatural principle or ability planted in him, which ſtill remains and abides, and which differs much from natural habits, for theſe are partly and ſometimes wholly acquired by uſe and frequent practiſe; whereas this ſpiritual principle is not gotten or acquired, but infuſed; nor can it be utterly loſt, as natural habits may, but abides for ever, *John* 14. 16. Sometimes 'tis called the *Seed of God*, which ſhall grow up to perfection, 1 *John* 3. 9. Sometimes a *Fountain*, yielding continual ſupplies of Grace, *John* 4. 14. ſometimes from the Author (from whom it is derived) 'tis called the *life* of Chriſt, 2 *Cor.* 4. 10, 11. and ſometimes the *new birth*, or being regenerated and born again, *John* 3. 5, 7. Doubtleſs it is a moſt powerful ſpiritual principle, which raiſeth and elevateth the ſoul far above natural ſtrength and reaſon. Thoſe Creatures that have no higher principles and faculties then ſenſe, uſe them ſenſually; but as for man,

man, who enjoyes the ſame faculties under the command of a reaſonable Soul, he uſeth them rationally; but when he is new born, and becomes a ſpiritual man, thoſe faculties of the underſtanding, will, and affections (which when they had no other command but Reaſon, had no more but rational operations) being now governed and acted by the Spirit of Chriſt, they work *ſpiritually:* Hence he is ſaid to be *led* by the Spirit, and to *walk* in the Spirit, and after the Spirit, *Gal.* 5. 18, 25. *Rom.* 8. 1.

Secondly, This divine Principle, this new ſpiritual Birth and Regeneration, is more then the *improvement* of the moſt excellent, natural, or rational abilities; for it being infuſed and wrought in the ſoul of man by the mighty Power of God, and the *invincible* operation of the holy Ghoſt, this argues that man, or the reaſonable Creature, is meerly paſſive in his firſt receiving this ſpiritual ſupernatural life; and thus much the very phraſes of Scripture import, that as we are *paſſive* in our firſt Creation, or Generation, ſo we are *paſſive* in our Renovation or regeneration, *Epheſ.* 2. 1, 5, 10. 1 *Pet.* 1. 3, 23. *John* 3. 3, 5. *Gal.* 6. 15. Indeed if it were no more but the improving of ſomething which we had in us before, or the ſtrengthening only of that which was weak in us, then man himſelf might co-opperate with the Spirit of Chriſt in producing this new Birth; but ſeeing it is the infuſing or planting of a divine Principle, which was not at all before in the *rational Creature,* man muſt needs be *paſſive* in the firſt work of *regeneration*: Nature being corrupted can do nothing, unleſs it be to hinder and oppoſe this work, for it is *enmity* againſt God, *Rom.* 8. 7. At the beſt, *Nature* is but the *matter* which is renewed or new formed;

and *matter*, as we all know, can have no operation at all; and therefore it is rightly termed, *a ſupernatural work*, or a work beyond Nature. (p)

(p) *See Mr.* White *on the* Scriptures, *cap. 7. of the Spiritual Mans Acts.*

Thirdly, Man being thus *paſſive* in his ſpiritual renovation, or new Creation, 'tis impoſſible for him with all his Reaſon, to diſcover how and after what manner it is firſt wrought in him, as it is impoſſible for one to know how he receives his own life: though he may diſcern ſome terrors of Conſcience and conſternation of ſpirit in himſelf as *preparatories* thereunto, and may alſo underſtand the motions and operations that are performed by him after his *regeneration*, for then his ſpirit, or the principle of his reaſon and underſtanding being renewed and ſanctified, works together with the Spirit of Chriſt; yet as to the firſt act of *ingenerating* and receiving Grace, the ſame being wrought in him, not by him, yea, and that in an inſtant, and not by degrees, it cannot be diſcerned how and in what manner it is wrought, either by natural Reaſon, for that cannot ſpiritually underſtand ſpiritual things; or by ſpiritual ſenſe and experience, for that flows from ſpiritual life already received, and therefore cannot diſcern what was done before it had any being at all: The giving of ſpiritual life, and the giving of the ſenſe of it to Chriſtians, are two diſtinct acts of the Spirit of God, which ſeldom or never go together in an ordinary way. This heavenly myſtery of regeneration is beyond the underſtanding and capacity of a meer rational man, as Chriſts w rds to *Nicodemus*, and his words to Chriſt again, do import, *John* 3. 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, 12.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, The ſpiritual mans acts and operations do far tranſcend the acts and operations of the natural or meer rational man, both in reference to things natural, or the things of this life, which the one apprehendeth and uſeth in a meer natural or rational manner, the other after a holy and ſpiritual manner, and for a ſpiritual end; and more eſpecially in reference to things ſpiritual, as the unſearchable Treaſures and Riches of Chriſt, and the glorious Myſteries of the Goſpel; ſuch ſpiritual things are apprehended and uſed by the natural man *carnally* (for he knows Chriſt only after the fleſh) as on the contrary, outward and carnal things are apprehended and uſed by the ſpiritual man *ſpiritually*, but much more thoſe things that are ſpiritual in their own nature, 1 *Cor.* 2. 15. which he may be ſaid to apprehend and receive *ſpiritually*, in reſpect of the *object*, or that which is ſpiritual in the *object*, by a ſpiritual light and judgment (beyond the natural light of Reaſon) and in a ſpiritual ſupernatural way: Now this is more then any natural or meer rational man, though never ſo much improved, can attain unto by the Principles of Reaſon.

Fifthly, The meer rational man, and the ſpiritual man (both living under the means of Grace, and both of them believing) differ much in the nature and effects of their *Faith*, as they do in their knowledge of ſpiritual things: The Faith of the ſpiritual man is a true *juſtifying* Faith, grounded and built upon a *divine teſtimony*; but the Faith of the meer rational man is but *temporary*, or hiſtorical.

Firſt, They proceed from different cauſes and *principles*, the one being infuſed by the Spirit of Chriſt dwelling and abiding in the ſpiritual man; the other

being the effect only of natural *Reaſon*, further enlightned and improved (at the moſt) by ſome common operations and aſſiſtances of the Spirit of God in the Miniſtry and Ordinances of the Goſpel, which a *Reprobate* may partake of, *Heb.* 6. 4, 5, 1.

Secondly, They are found in divers *ſubjects*. True effectual Faith is only found in perſons that are truly *regenerate*, born of God, and partakers of the *divine nature*, *John* 5. 24. and 3. 5. 1 *John* 5. 1. But hiſtorical or *temporary* Faith may be in ſuch as have no *root*, no ſeed of God abiding in them, ſuch as are not born of God; for theſe are both one in Scripture, *Luke* 8. 13. 1 *John* 3. 9.

Thirdly, There is that ſpiritual evidence and certainty in the faith of the one which is not in the faith of the other: True divine Faith ſo apprehends ſpiritual and heavenly things, as having a real being in the Promiſe of God, though they have no ſubſiſtence as yet in themſelves, *Heb.* 11. 1. *Rom.* 4. 17. *John* 8. 56. *Heb.* 11. 27. Now this Faith, which is the *evidence* and demonſtration of things that are inviſible to the outward Senſes, makes no uſe in its ſpiritual ſight or apprehenſion either of Senſe or Reaſon; not of *Senſe*, for things inviſible cannot be the object of Senſe; nor of *Reaſon*, which in this caſe can help but little more then Senſe, ſeeing it receives information by Senſe, from whence it gathers things by way of diſcourſe; which indeed may convince a man that things are, but can give him no evidence or demonſtration of the things themſelves, what they are in their own nature: Hence it is, that when a man comprehends things by Reaſon, he may be able by diſcourſe of Reaſon to inform another man of that which he knows, and by that means may cauſe him

to

to underſtand it as well as himſelf; but he that apprehends ſpiritual things themſelves, as the true Believer or Spiritual man doth, cannot by diſcourſe of Reaſon make another man, that is a ſtranger to what he enjoyes, underſtand what he himſelf ſeeth, feeleth, and taſteth. But as for *hiſtorical* Faith, or that Faith which is in the meer rational man, it wants this clear *evidence* and demonſtration, having no further aſſurance of what it believes then that which Reaſon ſuggeſts, which may rather be termed a *conviction*, that ſuch things muſt be, then an *evidence* what they be; whereby it plainly appears (which yet may be more largely and fully proved out of Scripture) that true juſtifying Faith, and that Faith which is only temporary and hiſtorical, differ not only *gradually*, in reſpect of degrees, but *ſpecifically* in nature and kind; the grounds of aſſurance on which they are built being of a far different nature.

Fourthly, This difference will further appear, if we conſider that the *effectual* Faith of the ſpiritual man reſts and depends upon, and is *ultimately* and finally reſolved into a *divine teſtimony*; but hiſtorical Faith, or the Faith of the natural or meer rational man, is built upon a *humane teſtimony*, which our Saviour calls the *revelation* of fleſh and blood, *Matth.* 16. 17. As the Apoſtle calls the other the *demonſtration* of the Spirit and of *power*, and the revelation of things by the Spirit, which are underſtood only of ſpiritual men, 1 *Cor.* 2. 4, 10, 14, 15. to whom they are manifeſted, and who have the Spirit and Mind of Chriſt in them, which enables them ſpiritually to underſtand that manifeſtation or revelation. This way of ſpiritual demonſtration to the ſpiritual mind of the true Believer, is far different from, and

doth far tranſcend that way of *conviction* which is only by reaſon or rational diſcourſe; and in this reſpect is more excellent and divine then hiſtorical Faith, or the Faith of the meer rational man, which is not chiefly grounded upon a divine Teſtimony or Authority, but relyes upon, and is ultimately reſolved into an humane teſtimony, or the reaſonableneſs of the truth and wayes of God: The glorious Myſteries of the Goſpel, though they could never be found out by all the reaſon and wit of man, 1 *Cor.* 2. 9. yet they are conſonant to right Reaſon; and therefore mans reaſon doth aſſent thereunto: As for example, The Creation of the World, the Reſurrection of the Body, the Incarnation of Chriſt, and the like, theſe may be acknowledged by mans Reaſon to be poſſible, upon ſuppoſitinn of Gods Almighty Power, and the Riches of his Grace, yea, and fit to be done by him, whoſe great deſign is to make known the glory of his Power and Grace in the Ages to come: So that howſoever theſe Truths are *myſteries* of Faith, and to be believed, yet ſeeing *Reaſon*, which is a humane teſtimony, may approve them, it is evident that ſuch an *hiſtorical* Faith, believing theſe things only for the reaſonableneſs of them, is but a humane faith, and reſts upon a humane teſtimony: And ſo it may be ſaid concerning the Scriptures themſelves, if a rational man believe them to be the Word of God, chiefly upon the Churches *teſtimony* of them, or upon the *reaſonableneſs* of the truths therein mentioned, or upon the obſervation of the truth of thoſe Sacred writings in moſt things, which makes him therefore *rationally* conclude, that they are true in all. If this be the chiefeſt ground of his belief, by way of rational inference from ſuch premiſes

miſes, then truly he believes upon a humane and not a divine teſtimony, which is alwayes accompanied with a clear ſpiritual demonſtration of divine truths, made evident by the light of the Spirit of God to the ſpirit of a true Believer.

Fifthly and Laſtly, True juſtifying Faith, or the Faith of the *ſpiritual man*, differs from hiſtorical Faith, or the Faith of the meer *rational man* in the object of it: Hiſtorical faith, though it may aſſent to the truth of Gods Promiſes of Reconciliation, Pardon, and Salvation by Chriſt, yea, and may believe the goodneſs of them in general, yet it doth not embrace and apply the goodneſs of them in particular as true juſtifying Faith doth, which counts all other things loſs, that it may gain Chriſt, and be found in him, *Phil.* 3. 8, 9. and which enables a man heartily and really to cloſe with Chriſt in the Promiſe, and to apply him particularly, ſaying, This is my *Beloved*, this is my *Friend*, who loved *me*, and gave himſelf for me. And thus we ſee that there is no ſmall difference betwixt the faith, knowledge, and operations of the ſpiritual man, and the faith, knowledge, and operations of the meer *rational* man, in and about Chriſt and ſpiritual things: And if ſuch a man may have ſome kind of knowledge and faith in Chriſt, and the myſteries of the Goſpel, and yet come ſhort of eternal life and ſalvation, then certainly no man that is led only by the light of Reaſon, though he improve it never ſo much, can be ſaved without the knowledge of Chriſt as Mediator.

But of this in the next *Chapter*.

CHAP. XVII.

Shewing that none *can be* ſaved *by the meer* improvement *of natural* Light *and* Reaſon.

WHat the State and Condition of the beſt *Heathens* was and is in order to the everlaſting Concernment of their *immortal Souls*, we cannot certainly determine, nor dare we confidently pronounce that they are all in Hell: Though we ſay not with the *Pelagians*, that the improvements of Nature and Reaſon, or that light that is in every man (as others *phraſe* it) can make men everlaſting happy: Nor yet with the *Semipelagians*, that natural preparations and prediſpoſitions do beſpeak and procure *Grace*: Nor yet with the *Papiſts*, that works flowing from Grace do *meritoriouſly* contribute to more Grace and glory: yet this we may ſafely ſay, That as God gave the Heathens *Natural* light and abilities, and to ſome of them the improvement thereof more then to others, ſo he might as freely give them (in a way that we know not) *Supernatural* Grace and Strength, and reveal his Son to them, if it pleaſed him. Far be it from us notwithſtanding, to hold that a man may get to Heaven by thoſe meer improvements which are built upon Natures foundation; for if he ſhould accurately and punctually obſerve every jot and tittle of Natures Law (which the exacteſt *Naturaliſt* or *Moraliſt* doth not) yet this natural obedience would not at all be commenſurate to a ſupernatural

natural happineſs. Chriſt is the only *way*, that new and living *way*, by which God *aſſumeth* humane nature to himſelf, and maketh it everlaſtingly happy; by which we have acceſs to God, and communion with him. This made *Auguſtine* ſay, *Qui dicit hominem ſervari poſſe ſine Chriſto, dubito an ipſe per Chriſtum ſervari poſſit.* Whether the *Gentiles* could be ſaved by the Light of Nature and Reaſon without faith in Chriſt, is a Queſtion (I confeſs) much debated, both in the writings of the *Antient Fathers*, and ſome *Modern Authors*, both *Proteſtants* and *Papiſts*. Divers of the Antients, as *Juſtin Martyr*, *Clemens Alexandrinus*, and *Chryſoſtome*, were of opinion, that the *moral Heathens* might be ſaved by a general faith and knowledge of God. And *Juſtin Martyr* thought they might be ſaved by the light of *Reaſon*. (q) His Μερὶ λόγου, or *Dictamen rationis*, applied to the *Heathens* before the coming of Chriſt, you may read of in his *Apology*. The Church of *Rome*, repreſented in the Council of *Trent*, hath not yet determined, nor doth ſhe think fit to determine this Queſtion, Whether the moral *Heathens* might be ſaved by the improvement of the Light of Nature. Amongſt thoſe of the Reformed Religion *Zuinglius* was of this opinion, that the beſt of the *Heathens* were actually ſaved, and that Chriſt did communicate himſelf to them in an extraordinary way. But this is more then can be proved by him or any other: And herein not only *Gualter* and *Bullinger*, but all our Divines generally, do diſſent from him. *Aquinas* mentions an inſcription, found in the Sepulchre of a *Heathen*, in the time of *Conſtantine* the Greek Emperor, and *Irene* his Mother, with theſe

(q) *Juſtin Martyr. Apol.* 2.

theſe words, *Chriſtus naſcitur ex Virgine, & ego credo in eum. O ſol ſub Ireneæ & Conſtantini temporibus iterum me videbit*; whence he infers, that ſome of the *Heathens* were not altogether without the knowledge of Chriſt the Mediator. That ſaying of *Eraſmus*, whether in jeſt or in earneſt I know not, *Vix poſſum me continere quin dicam ſancte Socrates ora pro nobis*, may be ſeen and read in his Preface to one of *Cicero*'s Books. *Nego hanc Propoſitionem* (ſaith a fierce *Arminian*) *nemo poteſt ſalvus fieri qui Chriſto per veram fidem non ſit inſitus:* I deny this Propoſition, that none can be ſaved but ſuch as are ingraffed into Chriſt by true faith. And there are ſome that have coined a vain and groundleſs diſtinction of a threefold Piety, *Judaica, Chriſtiana, & Ethnica*, boldly affirming, that what *Moſes* was to the *Jews*, *Chriſt* to the *Chriſtians*, the ſame is *Philoſophy*, or the knowledge of God by Nature to the *Heathens*: But this is to fruſtrate the Grace of God in Chriſt the Mediator.

'Tis not denyed, but granted by us, Firſt, That ſome perſons have a more clear, explicite, diſtinct knowledge of Chriſt the Mediator (*r*) then others, according to the means of Grace which they are under, and yet both may be ſaved.

(r) *Vid.* Dr. Prid. *Lect.* 8. *de Salute Ethnicorum.*

Secondly, That there were ſome of all ſorts amongſt the *Gentiles*, noble and ignoble, learned and unlearned, for whom Chriſt died, and who did reap ſome benefit by his death.

Thirdly, God may and ſometimes doth in an extraordinary manner, unknown to us, reveal his Grace to, and work Faith in the hearts of ſome perſons: This he may do in thoſe that are born deaf and

and dumb among Chriſtians; and this he may alſo do in ſome Heathens. If God will work whether in an ordinary or extraordinary way, whether by means or without means, who can hinder him? Yea,

Fourthly, God may if he pleaſe reveal his ſaving Grace in Chriſt to a poor *Heathen* even at the laſt gaſp, by the ſecret inſpiration of his Spirit, as he ſhewed mercy to the Thief upon the Croſs. But that any *Heathen*, though never ſo rational and moral, can be eternally ſaved by the improvement of his natural abilities or moral vertues, without being implanted into Chriſt, and united to him as the Head and Mediator of the Church, which is his body, this we utterly deny, and that upon theſe following Grounds and conſiderations.

Firſt, In regard of that corruption and wickedneſs which is in every mans heart and nature. God *ſaw* that the whole *imagination* of the thoughts of mans heart was only *evil*, and that continually; the *Hebrew* word ſignifieth, not only the imagination, but alſo the purpoſes and deſires of mans heart, *Gen.* 6. 5. The heart of every *natural man* is deceitful above all things, and deſperately wicked, *Jer.* 17.9. It is not only an *enemy*, but *enmity* againſt God, *Rom.* 8. 7. By nature men are *dead* in treſpaſſes and ſins, and under the *power* of Satan, *Epheſ.* 2. 1, 2, 3. and taken *captive* by Satan at his will and pleaſure, 2 *Tim.* 2. 26. and therefore they cannot be ſaved by the light and power of nature without true faith in Chriſt as Mediator.

Secondly, The beſt works and higheſt attainments of the *unregenerate* (who ſtill remain in the ſtate of nature, and are not implanted into Chriſt) are ſinful and unprofitable; the very *prayers* and ploughing of the

the wicked are an *abomination* to the Lord. *No man* (ſaith our Saviour, ſpeaking of the unregenerate, *Matth.* 7. 16, 17, 18.) *can gather Grapes of Thorns, or Figs of Thiſtles; nor can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.* The *Church* her ſelf confeſſeth, *Iſai.* 64. 6. that all her *righteouſneſſes*, even her beſt works and righteouſneſs are as *filthy rags.* And the Apoſtle *Paul*, who, if any man, might have confidence in the fleſh, he much more, yet counts all his own *righteouſneſs* and beſt works but *loſs* and *dung* for the excellency of the knowledge of Chriſt, *Phil.* 3. 4, 8. And if it was thus with *Paul* and with the Church of God in reſpect of their *righteouſneſs* and works, then what ſhall we think of the works and performances of the moſt rational and moral Heathens! Surely they muſt needs be much more vain and unprofitable. Hence it is that *Auguſtine* ſaith of the greateſt vertues of the moral Heathens, that they were but *ſplendida peccata.*

Thirdly, Faith in Chriſt, true Goſpel faith, is indiſpenſably required (at leaſt in all *adult* perſons) as neceſſary to ſalvation. *Without Faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe God*, Heb. 11. 6. *Neither Circumciſion availeth any thing, nor uncircumciſion, but Faith which worketh by love*, Gal. 5. 6. *He that believeth on Chriſt ſhall be ſaved, but he that believeth not ſhall be damned: The Believer hath everlaſting life, but the wrath of God abideth on the unbeliever*, John 3. 18, 36. *He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life*, 1 John 5. 12. Nor is it a general Faith in God, as a Creator or Rewarder, thrt will ſave a man, but there muſt be Faith in Chriſt as Redeemer and Mediator; *for no man cometh to the Father but by him*, John 14. 6. *And this is life eternal*

nal to know thee, the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt whom thou haſt ſent, John 17. 3.

Fourthly, God will have his *dearly beloved Son* honoured and exalted in the ſalvation of ſinners; whether they be *moral* or profane, they need a Saviour, a *Sacrifice* to appeaſe the wrath, and ſatisfie the *Juſtice* of God for them; *He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath ſent him*, John 5. 23. *There is no ſalvation in any other beſides Chriſt, neither is there any other Name under Heaven given among men whereby we can be ſaved*, Acts 4. 12. *Other foundation can no man lay then what is laid, which is Jeſus Chriſt*, 1 Cor. 3. 11. Unleſs the *Moraliſt* with all his vertues and endowments be built upon this Rock and Foundation he muſt needs periſh everlaſtingly. Chriſt is the way, ἡ ὁδὸς, that way by which only man can enter into *eternal bleſſedneſs*: He is the *life*, the Author and Giver of eternal life, *John* 14. 6. *John* 11. 25.

Fifthly, God hath in his infinite Wiſdom *concatenated* and knit together the means and the end in the *links* of that Golden chain of ſalvation, *Rom.* 8. 30. ſo that none ſhall be ſaved and glorified, but ſuch as are predeſtinated to be conformable to the *Image* of Chriſt; ſuch as are effectually called, juſtified, and ſanctified through Chriſt. And again, whoſoever ſhall call upon the Name of the Lord ſhall be ſaved; How then ſhall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how ſhall they believe in him of whom they have not heard! And how ſhall they hear without a *Preacher*! And how ſhall men preach except they be ſent! *Rom.* 10. 13, 14. So then, thoſe *moral Heathens* to whom the Goſpel is not ſent, who are not effectually called and converted by the Spi-

rit

rit of Chriſt, ſo as to be made conformable to his *Image*, cannot be ſaved by all their moral vertues and improvements.

Sixthly, The Lord is a holy and righteous God, of *purer eyes* then to behold the leaſt iniquity with approbation; he loveth *righteouſneſs*, and hateth ſin; nor will he *juſtifie* any perſon at his *Tribunal* but ſuch an one as either hath a perfect righteouſneſs of his own (which no man hath) or is found in Chriſt, *cloathed* with his righteouſneſs, *who was made ſin for us, that we might be made the righteouſneſs of God in him*, 2 Cor. 5. 21. Now this way of *Juſtification* is divine and ſupernatural, far tranſcending the capacity of the moſt *moral Heathens*. *Adam* himſelf in the ſtate of Innocency looked for Juſtification by works, and by his own perſonal righteouſneſs, and not by the righteouſneſs of another; ſo that indeed this Goſpel-way of Juſtification is not only oppoſite to man fallen, but to man before the fall: It was never in mans Nature or Reaſon to ſeek for Juſtification by a righteouſneſs without him; and therefore if God had not revealed this way of Juſtification in and by his Goſpel, we, nor the wiſeſt men in the world, ſhould never have thought of it. That the moſt *virtuous* men that are (if ever they be truly juſtified and accepted) as well as the moſt *vitious* perſons, muſt be juſtified before God, not by working, but by believing; not by the improvement of their *moral vertues*, but by faith in a *crucified Chriſt*, reſting wholly upon him in the ſenſe of their ſin and miſery for pardon and ſalvation. The true Goſpel righteouſneſs, as it is wholly of Gods *procuring*, ſo it is alſo of his *revealing*. And as other *myſteries* of the Chriſtian Religion are far above the reaſon and capacity

city of a natural or moral man, ſo is this alſo. All the *Ariſtotles* and *Plato's*, all the learned rational Philoſophers in the world, could never have thought of ſuch a way as this for the *juſtification* of ſinners: And therefore this righteouſneſs of God is ſaid to look down from Heaven, and to be revealed from faith to faith, *Rom.* 1. 17.

Seventhly, No meer rational or moral man can be ſaved, unleſs he be reconciled and reunited to God, from whom he is ſeperated by ſin: Now this reconciliation and reunion muſt be by and through *Chriſt*, or not at all; for he is the only Mediator between God and man, who took on him the nature of man, and ſo joyn'd it to God by the *indiſſolvable* tye of the *Hypoſtatical* union: And whoever will be ſaved muſt be united to God through him by the *myſtical* bond of his Spirit, which Chriſt received for, and communicates to all the Elect that ſhall be ſaved; ſo that unleſs a man, be he *Jew* or *Gentile*, have the Spirit of Chriſt dwelling in him, and be *quickened* by the ſame Spirit that *raiſed* Chriſt from the *grave*, he is none of his, *Rom.* 8. 9, 11. unleſs he be *tranſplanted* out of the old ſtock, the firſt *Adam*, and made one ſpirit with the Lord Jeſus, the ſecond *Adam*, it is not all his moral vertues and endowments (if he were a thouſand times more vertuous then he is) that will bring him to Heaven.

Eighthly, To hold that a *Heathen* may be ſaved by the improvement of his moral vertues without faith in Chriſt the Mediator, is ſuch an opinion as is attended with many abſurdities; for if this were ſo, then ſhould the true Church of God partly conſiſt of ſuch Members as have no faith nor knowledge of Chriſt at all; or elſe ſuch ſhall be ſaved as do not be-

long

long to the *Catholick* Church of Chriſt, but are ſtrangers to it; whereas the Scripture aſſures us, that *the Lord adds unto his Church ſuch as ſhall be ſaved*, Acts 2.47. It will alſo follow from this abſurd opinion, that Chriſt dyed in vain, and that the preaching of the Goſpel, or Doctrine of Reconciliation by Chriſt is in vain, as to a number of perſons that ſhall be ſaved, if they may attain ſalvation by the improvement of the light of Nature and Reaſon, without the knowledge of Chriſt as Mediator, which certainly is not revealed in and by the moral vertues and writings of the *Heathen Philoſophers*, much leſs by the Sun, Moon and Stars, but by the preaching of the Goſpel. According to this Opinion another way, and much eaſier, and more agreeable to fleſh and blood then true faith in Chriſt, ſelf-denyal, and reſignation of the Soul to him, would be found out for mans ſalvation; and then we need no longer admire the riches of Gods Grace and Wiſdom in the Redemption and Salvation of Sinners by Faith in Chriſt (which yet is the great myſtery of the Goſpel.) Hence it is that ſome vain men in our dayes are ſo affected and tranſported with the moral vertue, of the *Heathen Philoſophers*, that they make little or no differeuce in their Books and Sermons betweeu theſe ard the Graces of Gods Spirit which are wrought in the Saints; as if to preach the Goſpel of Chriſt, and exhort Chriſtians to the exerciſe of Evangelical Faith Repentance, Love and other Graces, were only to read unto them a Lecture of *moral Philoſophy*. *Morality* is one thing, and Chriſtianity is another; whoever they be that go about by their moral vertues and works to appeaſe the juſt and holy God, or to comprehend him out of Chriſt the Mediator,

Mediator, will be dazled with the brightneſs of his Glory, and overwhelmed with the greatneſs of his Power; *For no man hath ſeen God at any time, the only begotten Son, which is in the Boſom of the Father, he hath revealed him,* John 1. 18.

But perhaps it will be ſaid, (*) *That the* Gentiles *which had not the Law did by Nature the things contained in the Law, it being written in their hearts,* Rom. 2. 14. *And therefore they might be ſaved.* (*) *Objections anſwered.*

If we apply theſe words of the Apoſtle to the unconverted *Gentiles* (for there are thoſe that expound the Text of the converted *Gentiles*) then we anſwer, That there is a natural and a ſupernatural inſcription or writing in the hearts of men; the one is *ratione luminis naturalis*, by means of that natural light and Reaſon that is in man, which will not ſave him, as hath been proved; the other is written in the heart of man, *ratione luminis fidei*, by the light of faith: By the former only natural and moral vertues are imprinted in the heart; but by the latter the true knowledge of Chriſt, and the Graces of the Goſpel, which a meer *Moraliſt* can never attain unto by the light of Nature and Reaſon, for theſe are written and wrought by the finger of the Spirit of God.

If it be further objected, *That* Cornelius *was a* Gentile, *that walked only by the light of Nature, yet his Prayers and Alms were accepted of God,* Acts 10. 1, 4.

This is a miſtake, for he had more then the bare light of Nature; for though he had not at this time a clear explicite diſtinct knowledge of the Perſon and Offices of the Mediator, yet he had the implicite

knowledge and Faith of Chriſt, and had imbraced the Doctrine of the *Meſſiah* that was to come, which he had learned of the *Jews*, with whom he had long convers'd, and which was afterward more fully opened and explained unto him by the Apoſtle *Peter*.

And thus we have proved that no man (be he never ſo rational and moral) can be ſaved by the meer light of Nature and Reaſon; yet nevertheleſs we cannot deny, but that the rational intellectual delights of ſome *Heathen Philoſophers* ought to be preferred far before all *corporeal* and ſenſual pleaſures: And withal it muſt be acknowledged, that Reaſon and moral Vertues being improved will help a man to bear *affliction*, yea, to *dye* with more courage and compoſedneſs then others that are not ſo *rational* and *moral*: And though *Reaſon* of it ſelf, without true Faith in the Blood of Chriſt, will not bring us to Heaven, yet we have great cauſe to bleſs God for the comfortable uſe of our *Reaſon* and *Intellectuals*, which is a mercy that many are deprived of. But of theſe particulars we ſhall ſpeak more fully in the following Chapters.

CHAP. XVIII.

Shewing, that thoſe delights *that are* rational *and* intellectual *do far excel all* ſenſitive pleaſures.

ALthough the light of *Reaſon* be but as a Candle in compariſon of the light of divine and ſupernatural Revelation, which is as the light of the Sun; yet it is a pleaſant thing to behold this Candle. As for

for that light which is meerly corporeal, 'tis but a dark ſhadow of intellectual brightneſs: The more noble and excellent any being is, the purer pleaſure and delight it hath proportion'd to it: *Senſitive* pleaſure hath more of dregs; *Intellectual* pleaſure more of quinteſſence in it. If pleaſure were to be meaſured only by the *corporal* ſenſes, truly then the brutes (being more exquiſite in ſenſe) might have a choicer portion of happineſs then man can attain to; but therefore hath Nature very wiſely provided, that the pleaſure of *reaſon* in man ſhould be far above any pleaſure of *ſenſe*. There are divers degrees of pleaſures, ſuch as they be, according to every mans genius and diſpoſition: As he is more noble and excellent, or more vile and abject, ſo is the nature of thoſe things wherein he delighteth; and ſo is his pleaſure either more *noble*, or more *baſe*; either more pure and unmixt, or more impure and mixt; either of longer or of ſhorter continuance: Of thoſe delights which man taketh in by the bodily ſenſes (we ſay) that which is received by the ſenſe of *touching* is the *baſeſt*; for as it is the moſt groſs and earthy of all the external Senſes, ſo are the pleaſure that are taken by it. The delight that is taken by the Senſe of *taſting* is not altogether ſo baſe, but yet brutiſh enough. As for the delight which is taken by *ſmelling*, 'tis but little, and nothing ſo pleaſant as the contrary is unpleaſant; for a good ſmell delighteth not ſo much as an ill ſmell offendeth; and beſides, this Senſe of *ſmelling* is not ſo quick and ſharp in men as in beaſts. The pleaſures that are received by the Senſe of *hearing* in man, have more beauty and excellency in them, for the more they participate of the nature of the *Air*, they are ſo much the leſs earthy and brutiſh; and

thoſe delights which we receive by the eyes, are yet more excellent then the reſt, becauſe the eyes are of the nature of fire, which comes neareſt to the *Cæleſtial* nature. Howbeit the beſt and nobleſt of thoſe pleaſures, which man receives by the corporeal Senſes, are baſer and of leſs excellency then the leaſt and meaneſt of thoſe pleaſures which are received by the *powers* of the rational Soul; for as the Soul is much more worthy and noble then the Body, ſo the pleaſures and delights thereof are much more noble and generous then thoſe of the body; and ſuch delights as are moſt proper to the ſpirit and mind of man, are pureſt and beſt of all; amongſt which that delight which conſiſts in the contemplation of God is the chiefeſt. The pleaſures of reaſon and of the mind and ſpirit of man continue much longer then corporeral delights and pleaſures, becauſe the rational ſoul or ſpirit is not ſo apt to be weary and tired as the body is, but doth recreate and refreſh it ſelf with variery of objects. No marvel indeed if thoſe that are wholly addicted to corporal and earthly delights deride and contemn ſuch as highly eſteem theſe rational and intellectual delights (inſomuch that they are willing to forgo the goods and pleaſures of this world, that they may enjoy the ſame) theſe perſons deride and ſpeak evil of that which they know not, of whom it may be truly ſaid, that they reſemble the Swine, that delights more in a dirty Puddle or Sink, then in pretious Stones and ſweet Odors, becauſe they want judgment rightly to diſcern and eſteem the value of thoſe things which they contemn and deride. Every being chuſeth to it ſelf ſome kind of pleaſure or other, and the more excellent any being is, the higher and more generous is its delight and pleaſure.

For,

For, firſt, If we look up to the chiefeſt being, God himſelf, he takes infinite delight in himſelf; as all other perfections, ſo the perfection of all true and real pleaſure is enjoyed by God himſelf in a moſt ſpiritual and tranſcendent manner: That which we call riches and honour is in him his own Excellency and Glory; and that which amongſt men is accounted pleaſure, is with him that infinite ſatisfaction which he takes in his own bleſſed Eſſence, and the operations and works thereof. His glorious Decrees and Contrivances, and all his providential Diſpenſations are full of delight and pleaſure to him; the creating of all Beings, yea, the permiſſion of all Irregularities contribute to his glory and pleaſure; the laughing of his enemies to ſcorn is a pleaſure fit for infinite Juſtice; and the ſmiling upon his Church, and the countenancing and favouring of his people, notwithſtanding their great weakneſſes and behindments, is a pleaſure fit for his infinite Mercy and Goodneſs: *Miracles* are the pleaſure of his *Omnipotency*; *Varieties* are the delight of his *Wiſdom*; *Creation* was an act of his *Pleaſure*: And it muſt needs delight him to behold ſo much of his own workmanſhip, ſo many pictures of his own drawing; *Redemption* by the death of Chriſt was alſo a clear expreſſion and manifeſtation of that ſingular delight and pleaſure which he took in the Sons of men, for *He rejoyced in the habitable parts of the earth, and his delights were with the Sons of men*, Prov. 8. 30. *Plutarch* that grave *Moraliſt*, ſpeaking of an *Epicure*, or *Atheiſt*, ſaith, *That if ſuch an one ſhould grant a God in his full perfections, he muſt preſently change his opinion and his life, he muſt be a Swine no longer, but muſt uncrown his roſie head, and yield practical obedience to this Dei-*

ty, who is infinitely perfect and glorious in himſelf; whereas now the wretched Epicure *looks upon this as his faireſt Roſebud, as the moſt beautiful Flower in his Garden of Pleaſure, that there is no Providence to check or bridle him, that he is not ſo ſubject or ſubordinate as to ſtand in awe of a* Deity: *But grant, O* Epicure (ſaith he) *that thou careſt not for a* Deity *in a* Calm, *yet what wilt thou do in a* Storm? *Thou careſt not for him in the Spring or in Summer, but wouldſt thou not be glad of him in Winter? Will it be a pleaſure then that thou haſt none to help thee, none to guide thee, none to protect thee!*

Secondly, The bleſſed Angels of God, thoſe Courtiers of Heaven, excel in ſpiritual intellectual delights and pleaſures, wherewith they are continually taken up and raviſhed, ſo that they trample upon all carnal ſenſual inferiour Objects, they neither eat, nor drink, nor come near, nor deſire to come near any carnal pleaſures. The painted and feigned Heaven of a voluptuous *Mahomet* would prove a real Hell to an Angel, or glorified Saint; nay, it would prove a Hell to a moral vertuous Philoſopher here upon Earth. Theſe *Angelical Spirits* reſemble God himſelf in their divine and ſpiritual delights and pleaſures, *ſunning* themſelves (as I may expreſs it) in the continual uninterrupted viſion and contemplation of God, in whoſe *light* they ſee light; in which *beatifical viſion* and contemplation of the divine *Eſſence*, the Angels behold all things that conduce to their happineſs in the twinckling of an eye, by a perfect *intuitive* knowledge, without any *ſyllogiſtical* or rational diſcourſe, and this fills them with unſpeakable unconceivable delight and pleaſure.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, If we look to Inferiour beings here below, every Creature hath ſome kind of delight and pleaſure: How does the *Inanimate* Being claſp and imbrace its Centre, and reſt there as in the boſom of delight! How flouriſhing is the pleaſure of Vegetatives and Plants! And as for ſenſitive Creatures their delights and pleaſures are greater and higher then the other, being propagated and maintained by acts of pleaſure: How does the Fiſh play and make ſport in its Element, and the Bird ſing for joy? But theſe ſenſitive *corporeal* delights (wherein moſt men reſemble the Beaſts and brutiſh Creatures by abounding in them, ſo much are they degenerated and debauched) are vain and fading, like ſo many ſparks they make a crack and preſently vaniſh; they are but outward *pictures* of pleaſures, as *Plato* calls them, which periſh with the uſing, nay, they leave a ſore tormenting ſting behind them. Remember this ye *Wantons* of the times, who crown your heads with Roſebuds, and wholly addict your ſelves to ſenſual and carnal pleaſures; though they be ſweet in the mouth, yet they will be poyſon in the belly, and the end will be bitterneſs and unſpeakable torment. How do we ſee men and women given over to, and even drowned in the pleaſures of the fleſh, like ſo many *Epicures*, or rather like ſo many Beaſts, not only in eating and drinking inordinately, but in all manner of whoredom and unclean luſts, which are baſer and more vile then the other! Eating and drinking belongs to the Senſe of *Taſting*, which is brutiſh enough; but theſe other carnal pleaſures belong to the Senſe of *Touching*, which is far more brutiſh: Experience may tell them that theſe Senſes are ſooner wearied and tired with their pleaſures then any

other; and that ſuch delights as they bath themſelves in do commonly bring with them more irkſomneſs and loathing then joy and pleaſure, leaving many times behind them a long and ſhameful repentance for pollutions contracted by them; yea, the baſer and more vile the pleaſures of the fleſh are, the ſooner is a man ſurfeited with them, and immediately after the act they become loathſome; as it is in thoſe that are given over to bodily whoredom, for how unſatiable ſoever they be, yet they cannot chuſe but be glutted therewith, as that wicked Strumpet *Meſſalina* was, and others of the like *brutiſhneſs*. And as for the pains that men take in the obtaining and uſing of theſe pleaſures, the more earthy and brutiſh the delight is, the greater labour is to be uſed about it; and the more exceſſively any bodily carnal pleaſure is uſed, the greater hurt comes thereby, as we ſee daily in *Gluttons*, *Drunkards*, and *wanton* laſcivious perſons, who contract to themſelves by their exceſs the worſt and moſt loathſome diſeaſes, pains, and aches.

Fourthly, If we therefore conſider the delights and pleaſures of *Reaſon*, and of the Mind of man (who is but morally virtuous) we ſhall find that they far excel and tranſcend the pleaſures of the body and outward ſenſes, even as thoſe things that are natural do far excel the things that are only artificial. Such as are addicted to *corporal* pleaſures are leaſt able to judge of thoſe pleaſures that are rational and *intellectual*; and ſo on the contrary, they that delight themſelves in rational and intellectual pleaſures abſtain moſt from thoſe pleaſures that are corporal and carnal, for theſe two kinds of delights are oppoſite, and in continual combate one againſt another. What

pleaſure

pleaſure did the *moral Philoſophers* take at their B nquet, though it was but a diſh of green Herbs, being ſeaſoned with rational Philoſophical diſcourſes? Theſe delights of Reaſon and of the mind were ſo ſweet and acceptable to many *Philoſophers*, that they eſteemed them more then the greateſt worldly Kingdoms and riches, which theſe men deſpiſed and ſet light by in compariſon of the ſtudy and knowledge of *Philoſophy*, and thoſe pleaſures that are intellectual. Men and Women, unleſs they be grown impudent and ſhameleſs in wayes of ſin (which indeed is the higheſt pitch of wickedneſs they can mount up to) will bluſh and be aſhamed of ſome corporeal pleaſures: This Crown of Roſes is but a bluſhing Crown: But who need bluſh at or be aſhamed of thoſe delights that are rational and intellectual, which need not fear the light or the Sun-ſhine, as the other do. Men faint and languiſh with ſenſitive delights and pleaſures, as experience ſhews; nay, ſuch is the ſtate and temper of the body, that it will better endure extream grief then exceſſive pleaſure: But whoever was tyred with *intellectual* pleaſures! Whoever was weary of an inward complacency! Whoever ſurfeited of rational joy! Senſitive pleaſures ingratiate themſelves by intermiſſion, *Voluptates commendat rarior uſus*, whereas all intellectuals heighten and advance themſelves by frequent and conſtant operations. The pleaſures of the body do but *emaſculate* and diſpirit the ſoul, they do not at all ſatisfie it; but rational pleaſure raiſeth and cheers the ſoul, and oyls the very members of the body, making them more free and nimble; nay ſpeculative delights will compenſate the want of ſenſitive pleaſures: Hence it was that a *Philoſopher* put out his eyes that he might be

be the more intent upon his ſtudy; he ſhut his windows cloſe that the Candle might ſhine the more clearly within. Amongſt all *mental* operations *reflex* acts taſt pleaſure beſt, for without ſome reflection men cannot tell whether they rejoyce or no: Now theſe acts are the moſt diſtant and remote from ſenſe, and are the higheſt advancements of Reaſon: Indeed ſenſitive pleaſures make more noiſe and crackling like thorns under a pot; whereas mental intellectual delights, like the touches of a Lute, make the ſweeteſt and yet the ſtilleſt and ſofteſt muſick of all. *Intellectual* vexations and troubles have moſt ſting in them (for a wounded Conſcience who can bear) why then ſhould not intellectual delights have moſt honey and ſweetneſs in them: Senſitive pleaſures are very coſtly and chargeable, there muſt be much preparation and attendance, much plenty and variety if a man will enjoy them: 'Tis too dear for every one to be an *Epicure* or Senſualiſt; but the pleaſure of the mind doth freely and equally diffuſe it ſelf; we need not pay any thing for it if we can but love and imbrace it: As for ſenſitive and corporal pleaſures, a ſick man cannot reliſh them, nor an old man imbrace them; a Crown of Roſe-buds becomes not a grey head, nor a grave *Senator*, but the pleaſure of the mind is a delight moſt fit for a *Senator*, for a *Cato*; 'tis an undecaying, a growing pleaſure 'tis the only pleaſure upon the bed of ſickneſs, and the ſtaff for old age to lean upon, when all other pleaſures forſake a man; the mind of him that has the *Gout* may delight it ſelf and make muſick, whilſt the body is in pain. A moral Philoſopher was ſo affected with the rational intellectual delights of the Soul, when out of the body in another World, that he breaks

out

out into theſe expreſſions, *There* (ſaith he) *ſhall I have the pleaſure of ſeeing all my Friends again; there I ſhall have the pleaſure of more enobled acts of Reaſon; there ſhall I taſt the ſo much long'd for ſweetneſs of another world.* Now if *Philoſophers* and *Moraliſts* have been ſo much affected with meer rational delights, how much more ſhould Chriſtians prize and be affected with thoſe ſpiritual, ſupernatural, and heavenly delights and pleaſures which are revealed in the Goſpel, and *which eye hath not ſeen, nor ear heard, nor hath entred into the heart of a* meer rational *man: With God is fulneſs of joy, and at his right hand are pleaſures for evermore.* Here are the beſt and chiefeſt delights and pleaſures which contain the very *quinteſſence* of all other delights. *Seneca* could ſay, *Hoc habet animus Argumentum divinitatis quod eum divina delectant*; This is an Argument of the Souls Immortality, that it is delighted with divine and ſpiritual things. Indeed the *ſpiritualiz'd* Soul of a Saint, by the perfect enjoyment of God, comes near the pleaſure of God himſelf. If that ſmall taſt which we have of God and ſpiritual pleaſures here in this life, bringeth much joy and ſatisfaction to the Soul, far beyond all meer rational delights, and Philoſophical pleaſures, how great will the delights and pleaſures of the Saints be in their moſt happy and glorious viſion and contemplation of God in Heaven, when they ſhall behold him face to face, and know him as they are known of him; whereas here they ſee him but darkly as in a glaſs and through a cloud.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIX.

Shewing that the light of Reaſon, *and much more the* light of Faith, *fortifies men againſt the* exceſſive fear *of death.*

ALthough there be a far more excellent way then that of *reaſon* and *morality* to overcome the fear of death, namely, by Faith in the death, and reſurrection, and victory of Chriſt, *O death I will be thy death, O grave I will be thy victory! Bleſſed be God who hath given us victory through Jeſus Chriſt:* Yet we find that the improvement of the *light of Reaſon*, and moral Vertues, in ſome Heathens have tended much to the compoſing of their ſpirits, and the allaying of their paſſions in their greateſt ſufferings, and when their immortal Souls were about to forſake their mortal bodies: The wiſeſt and moſt rational amongſt them have dyed with moſt compoſedneſs and ſerenity of ſpirit.

Arguments drawn from the light of Reaſon againſt the fear of death.

Concerning *Death*, The Reaſon of a man * will ſuggeſt theſe and the like Conſiderations to him.

Firſt, That a wiſe man ſhould not be like the inconſiderate vulgar ſort of people, that are of cowardly ignoble ſpirits, and afraid to dye; nor ſhould he be led by opinion, but by judgment in this matter. No man knows what death is that he ſhould fear it; and there is no reaſon that he ſhould fear a thing whereof he is wholly

ly ignorant; and therefore *Socrates*. the wiſeſt man amongſt the Philoſophers, when he was about to dye by the ſentence of the Magiſtrates, ſpeaks thus to his Friends, *That to fear death is to make ſhew of greater underſtanding and ſufficiency then can be in a man, by ſeeming to know that which no man knoweth:* And being ſollicited by his Friends at his death, to plead before the Judges for his life, and in the juſtification of himſelf, made this Oration to them, *If I ſhould plead for my life* (ſaith he) *and deſire you that I may not dye, I doubt I may ſpeak againſt my ſelf, and deſire my own loſs and hinderance, becauſe I know not what it is to dye, nor what good or ill there is in death: They that fear to dye preſume to know it: As for my ſelf I am utterly ignorant what it is, or what is done in the other World: Perhaps death is a thing indifferent, perhaps a good thing, and to be deſired: Thoſe things that I know to be evil, as to offend my Neighbour, I fly and avoid; thoſe that I know not to be evil, as death, I cannot fear, and therefore I commit my ſelf to you; and becauſe I cannot know whether it is more expedient for me to dye or not to dye, determine you thereof as you ſhall think good.*

Secondly, That a man ſhould continually torment himſelf with the fear of death, argues great weakneſs and puſillanimity. There is ſcarce a Woman (though ſhe be the weaker veſſel) but in a few dayes ſhe will be pacified and contented with the death of her Husband or Child; And why ſhould not Reaſon and Wiſdom in Man effect that in an hour which Time performeth in one of the weaker Sex, who is more ſubject to grief and paſſion? Shall not Wiſdom and Reaſon enable us to do more in this matter then ignorance and folly? Perhaps we account our death a great matter, as if

all

all things here below did depend upon us, and muſt ſuffer with us: This is but a wild conceit and vain imagination, for which there is no reaſon.

Thirdly, By this cowardly ſlaviſh fear of death man ſhews himſelf unjuſt and irrational; for if death be a good thing (as the beſt and wiſeſt Men conceive it is) why then doth he fear it? If it be an evil thing, why doth he make it worſe, by adding one evil to another?

Fourthly, For a man to fear death is to be an enemy to himſelf and to his own life; for he can never live at eaſe and contentedly that feareth to dye: That man only may be ſaid to be a Freeman which feareth not death; and truly life would be but a ſlavery if it were not made free by death; for death is the only ſtay of our liberty, and the common and ready receptacle of all evils; 'Tis then a miſery and bondage (and miſerable are all they that do it) to trouble our life with the fear of death, and our death with the care of life: What murmuring and repining would there be againſt Nature if death were not at all? If we ſhould ſtill have continued here, though never ſo much againſt our own wills and liking? Would not a durable life, accompanied with trouble and affliction, be much more inſupportable and painful then life with a condition to leave it? If death were quite removed out of the World, we ſhould deſire it more then now we fear it, yea, perhaps thirſt after it more then life it ſelf, as being a remedy againſt many evils, and a means to obtain much good; and were not ſome bitterneſs mingled with death, men would run unto it with exceeding great deſire and indiſcretion: To keep therefore a moderation, ſo that men may neither love life too much, nor

nor fly from it, that they may neither fear death, nor run after it, both ſweetneſs and bitterneſs are therein tempered together.

Fifthly, The light of *Reaſon* will tell a man, that death is a thing natural, a part of the order of the whole Univerſe, and very profitable for the ſucceſſion and continuance of the works of Nature; and wouldſt thou have the order of Nature changed, yea, ruinated for thee? Nay death is part of thy eſſence, it being no leſs eſſential to thee to dye then to be born and to live; in flying death thou flyeſt from thy ſelf; thy eſſence is equally parted into theſe two life and death; this is the condition of thy creation; this is the frame and conſtitution of thy nature; if it grieve thee to dye, why waſt thou born? Men come not into the world upon any other deſign, but to go forth again, after they have acted their part upon this Stage: To be unwilling to dye is againſt nature; 'tis as if thou wert unwilling to be a man; for all men are mortal, and therefore a wiſe *Heathen*, when news was brought him of the death of his Son, ſaid without paſſion, *I knew I begot a mortal man:* Children and Beaſts fear not death, yea, many times they ſuffer it chearfully: It is not then the light of Nature and Reaſon that teacheth us to fear death, but rather to attend and receive it as being ſerviceable to Nature.

Sixthly, Death is certain and inevitable, and therefore a rational diſcreet man will not torment himſelf with the fear of it. That which cannot be avoided ſhould be endured with patience and magnanimity; What is there more inevitable, more inexorable then death? And to what purpoſe ſhould we importune or parley with him that will not be intreated?

treated? In things uncertain we may fear, and in things that are not paſt remedy, we may do our endeavour to help and reſtore them; but for that which is certain and inevitable, as death is, we muſt reſolve couragiouſly to attend and endure it. Here we ſhould make of neceſſity a vertue, and welcome and receive this Gueſt kindly, for it is much better for us to go to death willingly and freely, then that death ſhould come to us and ſurprize us ſuddenly, and unawares.

Seventhly, To dye is a thing but reaſonable and juſt, for why ſhouldſt not thou give place to others as others have given place to thee? Why ſhould not they as well ſucceed thee in this life, as thou didſt ſucceed others that went before thee? If thou haſt made thy advantage of this life, 'tis but reaſon that thou ſhouldſt be ſatisfied with thy lot, and be willing to go hence, that others may come in thy ſtead and take thy place. Death is a debt that muſt be paid, whenſoever it is demanded; and it is againſt reaſon that thou ſhouldſt refuſe to dye, and ſo to diſcharge that debt which lyes upon thee. 'Tis a thing general and common to all to dye, and wilt thou ſtand alone by thy ſelf, and expect a priviledge and exemption, which is granted to no other man in the World? Wilt thou be ſhut out from the common lot of mankind, which all others partake of? Millions of men are already gone before us, and millions of men will follow us when we are gone; one generation paſſeth away, and another generation cometh; and as great a noiſe as we make in the World amongſt our Neighbours, there will be little notice taken of us when we are removed out of this life: And why ſhould we make ſo great account of our ſelves, when others take

take ſo little notice of us? Why ſhould we think that the whole World is concern'd in us, when ſo few that live near us do not at all remember us, or ſpeak a word of us?

Eighthly, Such men as are led by Judgment and Reaſon ſhould be ſo far from this ſlaviſh fear and puſilanimity, that they ſhould put on a generous undaunted Reſolution to dye, and even contemn death, eſpecially being required to dye in a good Cauſe, for Truth and Righteouſneſs, and for the good and benefit of their Country, which ſhould be dearer to them then a thouſand lives. He that knows not how to contemn death, ſhall never be able to perform any worthy Acts for God and his Country; for whilſt he goes about in a baſe cowardly manner to ſecure his life, he expoſeth himſelf to many dangers, and hazardeth his Conſcience, Honour, Vertue, and Honeſty: The contempt of death is that which produceth the moſt valiant Acts, and the moſt honourable Exploits. He that fears not to dye needs not fear the face of any man, be he never ſo great and potent in this World. *Elvidius Priſcus*, a noble *Roman*, being commanded by the Emperor not to come to the *Senate*, or if he came, then to ſpeak as the Prince would have him, and no otherwiſe, made this gallant and noble Anſwer, *That as he was a Senator, ſo it was fit he ſhould come to the Senate; and if being there it ſhould be required of him to give his advice, he would ſpeak freely that which his Conſcience commanded him.* Being further threatened by the Emperor, that if he ſpake his mind ſo freely, he ſhould dye for it: *Did I ever tell you* (ſaid he to the Emperor) *that I was immortal? Do you what you will, and I will do what I ought to do: It is in your power unjuſtly to put me to*

death, and in me to dye conſtantly. The noble *Lacedemonians* being threatened with hard and cruel uſage, if they did not preſently yield themſelves and their Country to King *Phillip*, who came againſt them with a great power, one in the name of the reſt anſwered thus, *What hard dealing can they ſuffer that fear not to dye?* And being told that King *Phillip* would break and hinder all their deſigns, *What*, ſay they, *will he likewiſe hinder us from dying?* And after this, when *Antipater* cruelly threatened them what he would do unto them, if they did not comply with his demands, anſwered, *If thou threaten us with any thing that is worſe then death, death ſhall be welcome to us.* Theſe were men guided and acted only by the light of Reaſon and moral Vertues, which raiſed them above the threatnings of their greateſt enemies, and the fear of death: And ſhould not Chriſtianity, the beſt and moſt excellent Religion (as hath been ſufficiently proved in this Treatiſe) much more ennoble our ſpirits, and raiſe our hearts above all ſlaviſh fears? If we be Chriſtians and Believers, we may then argue and reaſon ſpiritually from Faith in the Word and Blood of Chriſt (which the moſt *moral Heathens* could never attain unto) againſt the ſlaviſh fear of death, in this manner.

[*Two Arguments from Scripture againſt the fear of death.*]

Firſt, Did not our bleſſed Saviour dye and riſe again for this end, to deliver us not only from the curſed effects of death, and from the Devil, as the Executioner thereof, but alſo from the fear of death, that thereby he might cure us of this fear, and raiſe us above

above it, *Heb.* 2. 14, 15. Yea, and this was long ſince foretold and prophelied, that Chriſtians applying the victory of Chriſt over death, ſhould be ſo far from fearing death, that they ſhould tread upon this Enemy, and inſult over him, *Iſai.* 25. 8. *Hoſ.* 13. 14. compared with *1 Cor.* 15. 54, 55.

Secondly, Hath not God wrought us for the ſelf-ſame thing, that we being made new creatures, by the gracious operation of the holy Ghoſt, might aſpire unto glory and immortality, which we cannot fully enjoy till we dye, for we muſt be abſent from the body, that we may be preſent with the Lord, 2 *Cor.* 5. 5, 8.

Thirdly, 'Tis a condition which our Lord and Maſter puts us into when he firſt admits us to be his Diſciples, That we muſt deny our own lives for his ſake, and not only be content to take up the Croſs in other reſpects, but our lives ſhould not be dear to us when he calls for them, *Luke* 14. 26. We pray that Gods Kingdom may come, namely, the Kingdom of Glory as well as that of Grace; and by death we muſt enter into this Glory; *We are born again* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *to a lively hope of this glorious Inheritance*, 1 Pet. 1. 3, 4. Now if we be afraid of the time and means of our tranſlation thither, how then do we hope for it after a lively manner?

Fourthly, Have we not the examples of the godly before us, even a Cloud of Witneſſes, who have deſired to dye, and were above the fear of death? *Gen.* 49. 18. *Phil.* 1. 21, 23. *Luke* 2. 29. *Pſal.* 14. 7. 2 *Cor.* 5. 2, 7. Yea, the whole Church of Chriſt, and general Aſſembly of the Saints, love his appearing, and earneſtly deſire that he would come quickly, 2 *Tim.* 4. 8. *Rev.* 22. 17, 20. How unbecoming is

it for a Chriſtian to fear death with a ſlaviſh fear? For hereby he diſhonours God, and diſgraceth his Religion, as if it did not afford ſufficient incouragements and ſupports againſt this fear. Some Heathens (as we have heard) that had not the true knowledge of Chriſt, have dyed couragiouſly and undauntedly; And ſhall a Chriſtian, whoſe life is hid with Chriſt in God, and who is riſen with Chriſt, and ſits together with him in heavenly places, be afraid to dye? 'Tis the property of wicked men to dye unwillingly, their death is compell'd, and not voluntary; And ſhall ours be ſo too? Shall we be afraid of a ſhadow, we that are paſſed from death to life, and ſhall live for ever, becauſe Chriſt ever lives? The ſeparation of the ſoul from God is death indeed, but the ſeparation of the ſoul from the body to a true Believer is but the ſhadow of death. If we be in love with life, why do we not affect that life which is eternal, and deſire to be diſſolved that we may be poſſeſſed of it?

Fifthly, Shall we in this caſe be worſe then Children or mad Men, neither of which fear death? Shall not Reaſon and Religion prevail more with us, then Ignorance and Madneſs with them? Do we that are the peculiar People of God, rather deſire to remain in *Egypt*, or in the doleful irkſome Wilderneſs (for this World is no better) then to enter into *Canaan*, yea, into the heavenly *Canaan*, where we ſhall be at perfect reſt? Is not death ordinary and common amongſt Chriſtians? Do not ſome of our Friends and Neighbours dye dayly? *Adam* had more reaſon to fear death then we, for he never ſaw man dye an ordinary death before him; but for us to be afraid to dye, who ſee thouſands dye before us, is the more intol'erable. The whole Creation groans, waiting for the

the liberty of the Sons of God, and earneſtly longing for this change, *Rom.* 8.21,22. And ſhall we be worſe then the brute Beaſts and other Creatures, and afraid of that Porter that opens the door to our own everlaſting happineſs? Hath not this Enemy (which ſeems terrible to us) been often foyl'd and vanquiſhed? Hath he not been beaten by Chriſt and thouſands of his Saints? And ſhall it be terrible to us to encounter a vanquiſhed diſarm'd Enemy, whoſe ſtrength and power is deſtroyed? 'Tis in vain (if we think) to ſhun that which cannot be avoided; for it is appointed unto all men once to dye; death is the way of all fleſh, and there is no diſcharge from this War: What man is he that liveth and ſhall not ſee death? *Heb.* 9. 27. *Pſal.* 89. 48. *Eccleſ.* 8. 8. And therefore we muſt reſolve couragiouſly to meet and encounter this Enemy, for we cannot avoid him; if we go not to him he will come to us, ſo that we ſhall be unavoidably ingaged in this conflict ſooner or later.

Sixthly, Why ſhould a Chriſtian fear or be troubled, conſidering what a gain and advantage death will be to him? For it puts a period to all thoſe tempeſts and ſtorms, thoſe boyſterous temptations, paſſions, and afflictions, with which his life was continually toſſed and incumbred, and brings him to a ſafe harbour; it is to him a ſweet ſleep, a bed of reſt after all his toyl and labour in a vain and troubleſome world, *Iſai.* 57. 2. 1 *Theſ.* 4. 14. *Rev.* 14. 13. *There the wicked ceaſe from troubling, and there the weary be at reſt, and hear not the voice of the Oppreſſor,* Job 3.17,18. It is the day of a Chriſtians reward and of receiving wages; Then is the ſervant ſet free, and the Heir at full age; then ſhall the baniſhed

and ſtrangers from a far Countrey, ſhall enter into their Fathers houſe, and ſhall be received into everlaſting habitations, *Heb.* 11. 13. *John* 14. 2. *Luke* 16. 9. Death is the *Birth-day* of a Chriſtian, the *funeral* of all his vices and corruptions, and the *reſurrection* of his Graces. Death was the daughter of Sin, and in death ſhall that be fulfilled, The Daughter ſhall deſtroy the Mother; 'Tis the diſſolution of the Body, but the abſolution of the Soul. Then is the immortal Soul delivered out of a dark priſon, and then doth ſhe throw off her old ragged clothes and ſoul garments, that ſhe may be deck'd and adorn'd with the glorious Robes of Salvation, *Iſa.* 52. 1. 2 *Cor.* 5. 2, 3. Then doth a Chriſtian remove from an old rotten houſe, ready to fall about his ears, to a ſumptuous Pallace. Doth that Landlord (think you) wrong his Tennant, or offer him hard meaſure, that would have him remove out of a baſe Cottage into his own Manſion-houſe, which he hath freely given him? Shall the Believer be unwilling to come to the end of his race and receive the prize, even an incorruptible Crown of glory? 1 *Cor.* 9. 24. This is the day of his Coronation; for though now he be an Heir of the heavenly Kingdom, yet he ſhall not be crowned till death with that Glory which is unutterable, 2 *Tim.* 4. 8.

Seventhly, The good man is taken away by death from much evil to come; and hath he any cauſe to quarrel with ſuch a freedom? Truly the conſideration hereof ſhould make us love this life the leſs, becauſe the Clouds gather thick about us, and we know not what fearful alterations may ſhortly befal us, either in our outward eſtate, or in matters of Religion, either by domeſtick broyls, or by forreign invaſion.

ſion. Should not a Chriſtian rejoyce exceedingly to be delivered from the continual malicious ſuggeſtions and ſtratagems of the evil Angels, and from a vile wicked World, that hates and perſecutes the Image of Chriſt where-ever it is? A World whoſe ſeeming felicities, as Honours, Riches, Pleaſures, Trade, Beauty, Friends, Children, Relations, and Acquaintance, are but vanities, full of labour and toyl, accompanied with much vexation, and affording no true reſt or contentment to that man that enjoyes them; neither can they help him in the leaſt when death ſeizeth upon him. All theſe things will be forgotten, and there will be no remembrance of them with thoſe that ſhall come after, *Eccleſ.* 1. 11. What a priviledge is it therefore to be delivered from theſe vanities? Yea (which is more) from that body of ſin and corruption which a Chriſtian groans under as his greateſt burthen, and is the more grievous and intollerable becauſe it infects and ſpreads over the whole man, ſoul and body, and is an inſeparable companion of this life, cauſing a troubleſome, yea, an irreconcilable war in the Soul, and ſwarms of evil thoughts, affections, deſires, and actions, beſides innumerable diſeaſes and diſtempers which attend the Body; And ſhould not death be welcome to us to ſet us free from all theſe evils and miſeries? Thus may a Chriſtian reaſon and argue againſt the fear of death upon far higher and more ſpiritual Grounds and Conſiderations then a moral Heathen can, and therefore he ſhould not be afraid to dye.

Eighthly, and Laſtly, That we may be the better fortified againſt the fear of death, let us call to mind and improve the living ſpeeches of dying Chriſtians, ſome of which ſhall be here mentioned.

The famous sayings of some dying Christians.

Good old *Simeon*, *Lord, let thy Servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.*

Stephen the first Martyr, *Lord Jesus receive my Spirit, and lay not this sin to their charge.*

Polycarpus to the *Procorsul* urging him to deny Christ, *I have served him eighty-six years* (saith he) *and he hath not once hurt me, and shall I now deny him?*

Ignatius, *I am the Wheat or Grain to be ground with the teeth of Beasts, that I may be pure bread for my Masters tooth; let Fire, Racks, Pullies, yea, and all the torments of Hell come on me, so I may win Christ.*

Cyprian, *God Almighty be blessed for this Gaol-delivery.*

Theodosius, *I thank God more for that I have been a Member of Christ then an Emperor of the World.*

Hillarion, *Soul get thee out, thou hast served Christ these seventy years; and art thou now afraid of death and loth to dye?*

Vincentius, *Rage and do the worst that the spirit of malignity can set thee on work to do: Thou shalt see Gods Spirit strengthen the tormented, more then the Devil can do the Tormentor.*

Gorgius to the Tyrant offering him promotion, *Have you any thing equal* (saith he) *or more worthy then the Kingdom of Heaven?*

King *Edward* the Sixth, *Lord bring me into thy Kingdom, free this Kingdom from Antichrist, and keep thine Elect in it.*

Bishop

Biſhop *Latimer* to Biſhop *Ridley* going before him to the Stake, *Have after as faſt as I can follow; we ſhall light ſuch a Candle by Gods Grace in* England *this day, as I truſt ſhall never be put out again.*

Biſhop *Hooper*, to one that prayed him to conſider that life is ſweet, and death is bitter, *True* (ſaith he) *but the death to come is more bitter, and the life to come is more ſweet: Oh Lord Chriſt, I am Hell, but thou art Heaven; draw me to thy ſelf with the cords of thy mercy.*

Thomas Bilney, *I know by Senſe and Philoſophy that fire is hot, and burning painful; but by Faith I know it ſhall only waſte the ſtubble of my Body, and purge my Spirit of its corruption.*

Glover to his Friend; *He is come, oh he is come, meaning the Comforter, Gods Spirit.*

John Bradford to his fellow Martyr, *Be of good comfort Brother, for we ſhall have a merry Supper with the Lord this night. If there be any way to Heaven on Horſeback or in fiery Chariots, this is it.*

Lawrence Sanders, *I was in priſon till I got into priſon; and now,* ſayes he, kiſſing the Stake, *welcome the Croſs of Chriſt, welcome everlaſting life: My Saviour began to me in a bitter Cup, and ſhall I not pledge him?*

John Lambert, *None but Chriſt, none but Chriſt.*

Baynam, *I feel no more pain in the fire, then if I were on a Bed of Down; it is as ſweet to me as a Bed of Roſes.*

Prieſt's Wife, to one that offered her money; *I am now going* (ſaith ſhe) *to a Countrey where money bears no maſtery.* And when the Sentence was read, *Now have I gotten that which many a day I have ſought for.*

Doctor

Doctor *Taylor*, when he came within two miles of *Hadley*, where he was to be martyrd, *Now* (ſayes he) *lack I but two Stiles, and I am even at my Fathers houſe.*

John Ardeley, *If every hair of my head were a man, it ſhould ſuffer death for the Truth of Chriſt.*

Alice Driver, when the Chain was about her Neck, *Here is a goodly Hankerchief* (ſaid ſhe.)

Julius Palmer, *To them that have the mind linked to the body, as a Thieves foot to a pair of Stocks, it is hard to dye indeed; but if one be able to ſeparate ſoul and body, then by the help of Gods Spirit it is no more maſtery for ſuch a one to dye, then for me to drink of this Cup.*

Eliza eth Folkes, embracing the Stake, *Farewel all the World, farewel Faith, farewel Hope, and welcome Love.*

Picus Mirandula, *Death is welcome to me, not as an end of trouble, but of ſin.*

Martin Luther, *Thee, O Chriſt, have I taught, thee have I truſted, thee have I loved, into thy hands I commend my ſpirit.*

Phillip Melancton, *I deſire to depart out of this World for two cauſes, one that I may behold the face of Chriſt in the Church Triumphant; the other, that I may be freed from the bitter contentions of Brethren.*

Tremelius, a Chriſtian Jew, *Let* Chriſt *live, and* Barrabas *periſh.*

John Buiſſon, *I ſhall now have a double Gaol-delivery; one out of my ſinful fleſh, another from a loathſome dungeon.*

Lewis Marſake Knight, ſeeing his Brethren go to their execution with Halters about their necks, which they offered not to him becauſe of his dignity, *Why,*

Why, I pray you (quoth he) *deny me not the badge and ornament of ſo excellent an Order, is not my Cauſe the ſame with theirs?*

Henry Voes, *If I had ten heads, they ſhould all off for Chriſt. God forbid I ſhould rejoyce in any thing ſave in his Croſs.*

CHAP. XX.

Shewing that humane Reaſon, *and the due* exerciſe *of it, is a great* mercy.

THat God ſhould make thee a Man, and not a Beaſt, a Toad, a Serpent; that he ſhould beſtow upon thee all the internal and external Senſes, the Reaſon and Intellectuals of a man, and ſhould preſerve and continue the ſame, notwithſtanding all the foggy miſts, vapours, and diſtempers, which the head and brain of man is ſubject unto; this is no ſmall mercy, if we conſider withal how many in our dayes are born Ideots, blind, and lame, wanting the uſe of their Senſes and Members; yea, and others who formerly had the free and comfortable uſe thereof, are now deprived of this mercy, without which all the friends, riches, honours, and pleaſures of this World are a burthen rather than a bleſſing. Is it not a wonderful thing, that mans brain, and the exerciſe of his reaſon and intellectuals ſhould be preſerved by the Power and Goodneſs of God, though many times there are, as it were, floods of water incloſed within his head and brain (when he thinks but little of it) which if the great God, who ſets bounds

bounds to the raging Sea, did not reſtrain, would preſently diſtract and overwhelm him: The *flegmatick humour* in man, which is of the nature of water, aſcends up to the *Brain*, by reaſon of *vapours* ariſing out of the *Stomach* like the *vapour* of a Pot boyling on the fire with liquor in it, and like to *vapours* that aſcend up from the Earth into the Air: Now when theſe vapours are come up to the Brain, they turn into the nature of thoſe humours of which they were bred, as the vapours that aſcend up into the Air turn again into the ſame nature of water of which they were ingendered. Thus we carry about us and within us floods of water, which if they ſhould be ſuffered to run with violence would overflow and bear down all before them; bodily health and ſtrength, and the uſe of reaſon and underſtanding would be quite overwhelmed by them. If we had no Examples of other Floods and Inundations, of Earthquakes and many other Judgments of God, whereby he puniſheth this wicked World, yet theſe *Water-floods* which we carry about us ſhould put us in mind of our ſin and miſery, and ſhould admoniſh and induce us to bleſs the Name of the Lord, for preſerving us and our reaſon and underſtanding in the midſt of theſe water-floods, whereby many men are deſtroyed. We read of a great King that was driven from the ſociety of men, and his dwelling was with the beaſts of the field; he did eat graſs as the Oxen, and was wet with the dew of Heaven, till he acknowledged that the moſt High ruleth in the Kingdoms of men, and giveth them to whomſoever he will, *Dan.* 4. 25, 32, 33. This was a ſore Judgment upon *Nebuchadnezzar*, thus to be deprived of his reaſon and underſtanding as a man; He was not really transform'd into

to a Beaſt, as *Bodin* and others imagine, but he was ſmitten by the Lord with *frenzy* and *madneſs* of mind, and deprived for a time of the uſe of his reaſon; for it is ſaid, that *his underſtanding returned to him*: And beſides this, his body was much changed and altered in feeding and living among brute Beaſts, his hairs were grown like Eagles feathers, and his nails like Birds claws: As we may read in ſeveral Authors of ſome wild brutiſh Men taken in Forreſts, that went upon all four as Beaſts do; they were ſwifter then a Horſe, and did howl like a Wolf, and were covered all over with hair: And thus it was in a great meaſure with *Nebuchadnezzar* till the Lord had mercy on him, and reſtored him. What are we more then others, that God ſhould deal more graciouſly with us then with them, in giving us better intellectuals, and more reaſon and underſtanding as men, and preſerving to us the uſe and exerciſe thereof? In this reſpect truly God hath put a great excellency upon man, and upon us in particular, ſo that we may well ſay with the *Pſalmiſt*, *Lord, what is man that thou art thus mindful of him?* Pſal. 8. 4. Man by the wiſe contrivance of God is *a little World*, a curious piece of *Embroydery*, an excellent piece of *Workmanſhip*, wherein the Wiſdom, and Power, and Goodneſs of God doth wonderfully appear. *I will praiſe thee* (ſaith *David*, Pſal. 139. 14, 15, 16.) *for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: Marvellous are thy works, and that my Soul knoweth right well, my ſubſtance was not hid from thee, when I was curiouſly wrought in the loweſt part of the earth.* 'Tis a ſpeech Borrowed from thoſe that work *Opus Phrygionicum*, the *Phrygian* or *Arras* work, which is curiouſly wrought and contrived. Man in reſpect of his frame

and

and conſtitution is like a piece of curious Tapeſtry or Embroydery.

Firſt, In reſpect of his body, and the parts and members thereof, which are curiouſly wrought and put together, by the wiſe contrivance of God. The forming and compoſing the body of man of ſo many bones, veins, arteries, ſinews, is a curious piece of workmanſhip: God hath with infinite wiſdom diſpoſed and placed the ſeveral members of mans body; ſome members are called *radical members*, as the Liver, the Heart, and the Brain; and in theſe God hath placed the natural, vital, and animal ſpirits: Theſe ſpirits are carried by the veins, arteries, and Nerves; the veins carry the vital ſpirits from the Liver, the arteries carry the natural ſpirits from the Heart, and the nerves carry the animal ſpirits from the Brain. The ſeveral members of the body are helpful and ſerviceable one to another; the ſuperiour rule the inferiour, as the Eyes guide and direct the whole Body, and the inferiour ſupport and uphold the ſuperiour, as the Feet, Legs and Thighs ſupport the whole Body; and as for the middle members they defend the Body, and provide things neceſſary for it, as we ſee in the Hands and Arms. This variety of the members of the body ſheweth the excellent Wiſdom of God; for if all were an Eye where would the ſeeing be? 1 *Cor.* 12. 15. So excellent is the body of man, that there are ſundry members thereof which God aſcribes to himſelf, as the Head, the Heart, the Eyes, the Ears, the Feet to expreſs his Attributes to us; yea, God hath made the body of man a Temple for himſelf to dwell in; and the Son of God hath aſſumed the body of man in one perſon to his Godhead, a dignity which the Angels

gels are not called unto. After the making of man he left nothing unmade but to make himſelf man.

Secondly, Man is curiouſly wrought and contrived in reſpect of his rational immortal Soul, and thoſe two noble faculties, the Underſtanding and the will, wherein man far excels all the ſenſitive Creatures: The rational Soul is the better part of man, more worth then all the World beſides, *Mark* 8. 36, 37. What is the body of man without the ſoul, but a dead Trunk, an empty Caſe? 'Tis the ſoul that is the pearl or precious jewel, the creation, infuſion, and operations whereof are like a curious piece of Embroydery, well becoming the Creator and Contriver thereof, who is a ſimple immaterial immortal Spirit, the Spirit of ſpirits, the Supream and Soveraign Spirit, the God and Father of Spirits, *Numb.* 16. 22, Bleſs God, O man, that hath given thee a reaſonable Soul, and inſpired thee with an immortal Spirit, wherein thou far excelleſt other Creatures. For,

Firſt, The reaſonable Soul of man can conceive of things by the light of underſtanding as well as by ſenſe, yea, it can conceive of things that never were in the Senſes, as things abſent which the Senſes never ſaw nor apprehended; it can conceive of things ſpiritual and immaterial, as Angels and Spirits, yea, of the divine Attributes of God, and that which is inviſible; by the things that are viſible we come to the knowledge of God who is inviſible, *Rom.* 1. 20.

Secondly, The rational Soul is able to reflect upon its ſelf, and its own acts and operations, which no meer ſenſitive Creature can do; it underſtands that it doth underſtand, and knows that it doth know:

And

And this understanding and knowledge of the rational Soul is large and extensive, for it can in a moment go over almost the whole World, and view it all as it were at once; whereas the Senses are limited and confined to a very narrow compass.

Thirdly, The rational Soul can invent things that were never before in being: What strange things for number, and skill, and variety are daily invented and contrived by mans wit and reason, by which also many great matters, both Civil, Military, and Ecclesiastical, are ordered and regulated? This is that Candle of the Lord which searcheth all the inward parts of the Belly, *Prov.* 20. 27. And God hath set the World in mans heart in regard of that reason and understanding that is in him *Eccles.* 3. 11.

Fourthly, The excellency of the reasonable Soul of man appears in this, that his understanding after a sort is made one with, and becomes the things that are understood, in that it conceives a true Image and *Idea* of the things to be understood; and herein the rational Soul doth somewhat resemble God himself, who hath the perfect *Idea* of all other things in himself; so the Soul of man doth, as it were, form Worlds of things within it self.

Fifthly, The excellency of the rational Soul appears in that divine thing called Conscience, which is more then a thousand Witnesses, yet subordinate to a higher Tribunal (beings Gods Deputy) for God is greater then Conscience, 1 *John* 3. 20. No man, be he never so great and potent can alwayes bribe Conscience, but it will give an impartial verdict at one time or other, either accusing or excusing him. In these and other particulars men may contemplate the excellency of Reason, and praise God for the exercise of it.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, and laſtly, The rational Soul of man becomes much more excellent, and is like a curious piece of Embroydery, by a new Creation, being made partaker of the Divine Nature; whereas by ſin the Soul of man was corrupted and alienated from the Life of God, yet now being born again of the Spirit of God, and Chriſt being ſpiritually formed therein, it recovers the Image of God, and is reſtored to a holy fellowſhip and communion with him, and will be a curious excellent Piece indeed, when ſhe is perfectly transformed, as ſhe ſhall be, into the divine Image, and cloathed with Glory and Immortality, *Pſal.* 45. 14. 2 *Cor.* 5. 2.

Let us now briefly recapitulate the Heads of this Diſcourſe, * touching Faith and Reaſon, ſo far as we have proceeded. It requires much ſpiritual Skill, as hath been ſaid, rightly to diſtinguiſh between them, and give to each its due; though mans Reaſon be much weakened and obſcured, yet a good uſe may be made thereof both in Civil and Divine things. There is a light in Reaſon, though far inferiour to that of Faith. How far this Light of Reaſon extendeth we have ſhewed. The beſt Heathen Philoſophers were ſenſible of great defects and languiſhings in their natural Reaſon and Abilities, though they aſcribed too much thereunto. Some there are amongſt Chriſtians that give too little to Reaſon in Religious and Eccleſiaſtical concerns; but others more generally offend in giving too much; and therefore we have here declared how and in what reſpects Reaſon and moral Prudence ſhould be exerciſed by us both in Civil and Church affairs. The Light of Reaſon proves that there is a God or Supreme

* *A Recapitulation of the ſeveral Heads.*

preme being, and that the Soul of man is immortal, and also the truth of the Christian Religion, and the divine Authority of the Scriptures, and is of excellent use in comparing and interpreting the Scriptures, and judging of Controversies. But though Reason be useful in these respects, yet the internal testimony of the holy Ghost doth principally witness the divine Authority of the Scriptures, and satisfie Conscience touching the same. Here is shewed when it is that Reason is rightly used, and when abused to the prejudice of the Spirits testimony in the Scripture; and likewise the difference betwixt the meer rational and spiritual man, and their knowledge, faith, and operations in and about spiritual things; that none can be saved by the meer improvement of natural Light and Reason; and yet notwithstanding the rational intellectual delights of Philosophers and Scholars do far excel all earthly and sensitive pleasures; yea, the Light of Reason (but especially the Light of Faith) enables a man to bear affliction, and arms him against the excessive fear of death. And lastly, That Mans Reason, and the due exercise of it is a great mercy, which should be thankfully acknowledged by us.

Having gone thus far, we shall now (by the Lords assistance) briefly sum up and comprehend in these two last Chapters the substance of what we intended to say concerning Faith and humane Reason.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXI.

Shewing diſtinctly in ſome particulars *the uſe of* humane Reaſon *and Knowledge in reference to the* Chriſtian Religion.

FOr the better opening and clearing of this great Point, to the ſatisfaction of the Chriſtian Reader, we ſhall firſt premiſe a few Conſiderations, and then afterward ſhew particularly what good uſe may be made of *humane Reaſon* and Knowledge in divine matters.

I. *Conſider.* That the Light of Nature and Reaſon is not near ſo clear and bright in us ſince the Fall, as it was in *Adam* before the Fall, but is much darkned, Eclipſed, and depraved, even in thoſe that are moſt rational and moral; whereas it was perfectly implanted in *Adam*'s heart and nature, we have but only ſome fragments of it remaining in us. This is ſo evident in Scripture and Experience, that it is generally acknowledged by all Chriſtians. When *Senſe* is deceived (*f*) *Reaſon* corrects *Senſe*; but when *Reaſon* errs, as ſhe often doth in divine and religious matters, ſhe cannot cure her ſelf, but her Miſtriſs *Divinity* muſt come in and teach her. *Sarah* being old, God promiſed her a Son; this ſhe laughed at, as being contrary to her Reaſon; in which reſpect ſhe thought it impoſſible that a Woman ſo ſtricken in years ſhould have a Child; but Faith corrected her corrupt Reaſon; ſhe believed by

(*f*) Weems *Portrait. of the Image of God.*

Faith that which her Reaſon could not take up and comprehend. Thus alſo *Nicodemus* failed in his reaſoning againſt the myſtery of Spiritual regeneration.

II. *Conſider.* That the Light of Nature, or natural Reaſon, the Light of Faith or Grace, and the light of Glory, ſhould be carefully diſtinguiſhed by us, and put in their ſeveral places and ſpheres: *Reaſon* is but as the light of a Candle, a glimmering, diminutive, derivative light; *Faith* is as the light of a Star, which is a far clearer and brighter light; but the light of *Glory* is moſt perfect as the light of the Sun, wherein we ſhall ſee God as he is, and behold him face to face. *Lumen naturæ* (t) *eſt quo ea cognoſcimus quæ ſolis naturæ viribus ſine auxilio Dei ſpeciali intelligi a nobis & dijudicari poſſunt; lumen fidei eſt quo ea cognoſcimus & intelligimus quæ Deus in verbo ſuo nobis patefecit; lumen gloriæ eſt quo beati ſpiritus in Cœlis clare & perſpicue vident glorioſiſſimam Dei eſſentiam.*

(t) *Vid.* Rob. Baron. *excercitat. de triplici Lumine.*

III. *Conſider.* That although ſome Truths and Myſteries do far tranſcend the Light of Nature and Reaſon, yet there is nothing true in Divinity that croſſeth the truth of Reaſon, as it is the remnant of Gods Image in us: Indeed when by Reaſon we take up a Truth, and by Faith we believe the ſame Truth, if in this caſe Reaſon claim the firſt place, ſhe is to be blamed as being not a dutiful Handmaid to Faith. As for the Doctrine of the *Trinity*, the Incarnation and hypoſtatical Union in Chriſt, the great myſtery of Predeſtination, *&c.* though theſe may be ſaid to be above the Light of Reaſon, yet they are not contray

trary or contradictory thereunto; 'tis the greateſt Reaſon in the World, that the Creature ſhould believe and reſt in the divine infallible teſtimony and revelation of his Creator. There are ſome things in Divinity *mixtly* divine; other things are *meerly* divine: In thoſe things that are *mixtly* divine Reaſon may be of uſe, yet only in the ſecond place, *Primo creduntur & poſtea intelliguntur*, as a man firſt believes the Souls immortality, and then he begins to take up the ſame by Reaſon; here Reaſon muſt not go before, but follow Faith, for that which *I* believe I believe it *ex authoritate dicentis*, relying upon the truth of him that ſaith it; and all the evidence I get by Reaſon is nothing to this *certitude*. If Reaſon ſhould go before as an Uſher to make way to Faith, we ſhould never believe; and hereupon the *Schoolmen* ſay well, *Rationes præcedentes minuunt fidem, ſed rationes ſubſequentes augent fidem*. *Reaſon* going before *Faith* weakens *Faith*, but coming after it ſtrengthens *Faith*. *Reaſon* makes not the matter more ſure *Ex parte veritatis dictantis, ſed ex parte intellectus aſſentientis*; In reſpect of God the Speaker, but in reſpect of the weakneſs of our underſtanding; for by this acceſs of further knowledge it is more confirmed. But now in things that are *meerly* and purely divine and ſupernatural, *Quæ cadunt directe ſub fide*, which fall directly under Faith, as thoſe high myſteries of the *Trinity*, and *Incarnation of Chriſt*, what can Reaſon or Philoſophy do here, but admire theſe depths which ſhe can never reach unto? Hence it is that God is pleaſed ſometimes to work effectually upon ſome learned Infidels, not by the eloquence and ſubtil reaſonings of learned Divines, but by the plain downright diſcourſes of Chriſtians of meaner

Parts. To this purpose that Story is remarkable which we read of; Divers Learned men having long endeavoured by strength of Reason and Argument to perswade an *Infidel* to be baptized into the Faith of Christ; he being learned also, did evade all their Arguments; at length a grave pious Man amongst them, of no repute for Philosophical learning, stands up, and bespeaks him with some downright affectionate expressions, which wrought so effectually upon him, that he presently submitted to the Truth in these words, (v) *Whilst I heard only humane Reasons, I opposed the same with humane Reasons; but when I heard the voice of the Spirit of God speaking powerfully, I presently yielded to that powerful voice.* 'Tis also reported of learned *Junius*, that before his Conversion (whilst as yet he was no better then an *Atheist*) meeting a plain Countryman, and discoursing with him about Religion, he observed him to speak so experimentally, and with so much affection, as made him conclude, that certainly there was something more in the Christian Religion then his humane Learning and Reason had yet discovered, and this was a special means of his Conversion.

(v) *Donec audiebam rationes humanas, humanis rationibus repugnabam; cæterum simul atque audivi Spiritum loquentem cessi Spiritui.*

IV. *Consider.* That the same Object may be and is known both by the Light of Nature and Reason, and also by the Light of Faith. You may know that there is a God, and that he made the World by the Light of Nature; *For the things that are invisible are clearly seen and understood by the things that are made, whereby we come to know his eternal Power and Godhead*, Rom. 1. 20. And we must believe this also, because

becauſe God in the Scripture hath revealed it, *Heb.* 11. 3. Faith and the Light of Reaſon go to the knowledge of one and the ſame thing different wayes; Faith doth it becauſe of the divine Teſtimony, Authority and Revelation of God (who is Truth and Goodneſs it ſelf) but the Light of Reaſon doth it, becauſe of Arguments drawn from the thing it ſelf, by rational diſcourſe. However we muſt hold to this as an undoubted truth, that though the Light of Nature and Reaſon, as it is a reliſt of Gods Image in man, be neceſſary in religious and moral things, yet it is not ſufficient, there being great decayes and languiſhings in our Reaſon, as the greateſt Philoſophers themſelves have acknowledged.

V. *Conſider.* That if we ſpeak of Nature and Reaſon as corrupted and depraved by ſin (as it is in every ſon of *Adam*) ſo it is an enemy, yea, enmity it ſelf againſt God, *Rom.* 8. 7. Φρόνημα, the very wiſdom of the fleſh, *i. e.* the reaſonings and diſcourſes of the natural man, his beſt thoughts, deſires and affections, the beſt inclinations and motions of his mind, are not only enemies, but enmity againſt God. An enemy may be reconciled, but enmity it ſelf can never be reconciled. The Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 1. 21. uſeth a ſtrange expreſſion, that *the World by wiſdom knew not God*; he doth not ſay, that the World through fooliſhneſs was ignorant of God, but that by wiſdom, that is, by the right uſe of Reaſon and diſcourſe it knew not God (as *Diodate* notes upon the Text) *They became vain in their imaginations* (ſaith the ſame Apoſtle, *Rom.* 1. 21.) The word is διαλογισμοις, which may be better rendred thus, they became vain in their reaſonings, or their practical inferences and diſcourſes, ſuch as they made out of the

principles they had in their underſtandings. So likewiſe, 1 *Cor.* 3.20. *The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wiſe,* not the ſimple thoughts, but, Διαλογισμους, the moſt prudent reaſonings and diſcourſes of the men of the world that they are vain. You have the ſame word, 1 *Tim.* 2. 8. which is tranſlated, *without doubting*; but it is, χωρις διαλογισμων, without reaſoning or diſpute: In the exerciſe of Faith and Prayer we muſt not argue againſt the Promiſe by our Reaſon. In this ſenſe the more humane Reaſon, Learning, and Wiſdom men have, the more oppoſition there is in them againſt God, and the great Myſteries of the Goſpel, 1 *Cor.* 1.20,26. and *Chap.* 2.9,10,11. and *Ch.* 3.18,19. And therefore *Auguſtine* wrote thus to a man of great learning and parts, *Ornari abs te Diabolus quærit.* But now if we ſpeak of Nature and Reaſon as enlightned and rectified by the Spirit and Word of God, ſo it is an excellent help in matters of Religion; let the Word of God, let the Teſtimony of the Spirit of God in the holy Scriptures firſt lay the foundation, and then Reaſon may build upon it. Reaſon ſhould not take the firſt place, or have the preheminence, but ſhould be ſubject and ſubordinate to Faith, as *Agar* the Bond-woman was to be to her Miſtriſs *Sarah* the Free-woman. We muſt not firſt conſult with Reaſon, nor ask a Reaſon of our believing, when we ſhould believe beyond Reaſon. A meer rational conſidering of means and ſecond cauſes is a great enemy to Faith. *If you would believe,* ſaith *Luther, you muſt crucifie that Queſtion, Why God would not have us ſo full of Wherefores.* Abraham *againſt hope believed in hope,* Rom. 4. 18, 19. *Contra ſpem, nempe carnis rationis & totius naturæ,* as ſome of the beſt Interpreters comment upon it; He believed againſt

againſt Senſe and natural Reaſon; in hope againſt hope, *i. e.* in hope ſupernatural againſt all the appearances of natural hope [*nothing doubting*] ſaith the Apoſtle, ſpeaking of *Abraham*'s Faith; 'tis the ſame word which you find, 1 *Cor.* 11. 29. *Nothing diſcerning*; as when a man looks on things with an eye of Senſe and Reaſon, he paſſeth a judgment of diſcerning, or *dijudication* upon them; as thus ſome things are eaſie, ſome things are hard. *Abraham* did not ſo reaſon or conſider of things when he believed: Faith when it is lively and ſtrong will ſubſcribe to a Blank, and will reſt on the Power and Goodneſs of God; when all things ſeem contrary in outward appearance, and to an eye of Reaſon; Faith can ſee love in anger, light in darkneſs, life in death (as we have the Woman of *Canaan* for an inſtance, beſides many others) Faith will tell a man, that the lower he is caſt down and abaſed, the higher he ſhall be raiſed, and the more he ſhall be comforted; and this is further then Reaſon can go. Faith (as a late godly Writer truly obſerves) hath a great and large proſpect, it can look over all the World, yea, and into the other World too; it beholds God who is inviſible, and is the evidence of things not ſeen: but now as for Reaſon it gets upon ſome little Mole-hill of Creature ability, and if it can ſee over two or three hedges, this is much; and therefore it is a great trouble to Faith to be tyed to Reaſon. If a man be able to go a journey of two or three hundred miles on foot, you will ſay he is a good Footman; yet if you conſtrain him to carry a little Child with him, this will be a great luggage to him; for though the Child may run along in his hand half a mile, yet he muſt carry him on his back, or in his arms, the reſt of the way,

eſpecially

eſpecially when he goes over waters and ſteep hills, which will be no ſmall burthen and trouble. Thus it is between Faith and Reaſon, Reaſon at the beſt is but a Child to Faith, Faith can foot it over Mountains of difficulties, and wade through the waters of affliction (though great and many) but when Reaſon comes to wade through an affliction, or to go over ſome great difficulty, it cryes out, and ſayes, Oh Faith, let us go back again and proceed no further: No, ſayes Faith, but Ile take thee upon my back Reaſon; and ſo it doth: But yet Reaſon is a great luggage and burden to Faith, which never works better then when it works moſt alone, for then it has recourſe to Gods Alſufficiency and Omnipotency, and finds enough there to quiet and ſatisfie the Soul.

But now having premiſed theſe five Conſiderations touching Faith and Reaſon, we ſhall ſhew the Chriſtian Reader in ſome particulars what uſe he ſhould make of humane Reaſon and Knowledge in reference to divine and religious matters; and that it ought not to be rejected, but to have its due reſpect and commendation.

Firſt, We find that many famous godly men have excell'd in humane Knowledge: *Moſes* that man of God was learned in all the Wiſdom of the *Egyptians*, *Acts* 7. 22. which was an ornament to him, and fitted him for his imployment. *Paul* that great Apoſtle was brought up at the feet of *Gamaliel*, *Acts* 22. 3. and did abound in humane Knowledge and Learning, though he counted it loſs for the excellency of the Knowledge of Chriſt, *Phil.* 3. 8. And the moſt eminent Inſtruments for God in his Church ſince the times of the Apoſtles have been men of great Reaſon and Learning, as *Athanaſius*, *Baſil*, *Jerome*, *Cyprian*, *Auguſtine*,

Auguſtine, Luther, Melancton, Bucer, Calvin, Jewel, Reynolds, &c.

Secondly, The Penmen of holy Scripture make uſe of it in that accurate method, thoſe figurative Expreſſions, Rhetorical Proprieties of words, inſinuating Proems, and rational Argumentations, which we meet with in the Bible. The Apoſtle *Paul* deduceth an Inference from a common principle of Philoſophy, *Acts* 17. 28, 29. and quotes the ſayings of ſome Heathen Writers.

Thirdly, Secular Learning, Reaſon and Knowledge, being ſanctified by the Spirit of God, helps a man to underſtand the Grammatical literal ſence (which is the true ſence) of the Scriptures. We meet with *Phyſicks* in *Geneſis*, with *Ethicks* in the *Proverbs*, and with many Alluſions in other parts of Scripture to the nature of Beaſts and Birds; and likewiſe with Alluſions to the Cuſtoms of the *Babylonians, Jews, Perſians, Romans*; therefore the knowledge of the Hiſtories of thoſe Nations, and their Governments, are very uſeful.

Fourthly, The knowledge of the times by the *Olympiads*, and other wayes of computation (wherein humane Authors miniſter much light) is neceſſary in an ordinary way for the right underſtanding of Scripture Chronology, and the Prophefies of *Daniel* and the *Revelation*, as appears by the Writings of learned *Mede* and others.

Fifthly, The knowledge of the Original tongues, *Hebrew* and *Greek*, in which the ſacred Scriptures were firſt penned, doth greatly help us to underſtand the right ſenſe of Scripture, wherein there are ſome Texts which cannot be ſo fully and emphatically rendered in any vulgar Tranſlation. And yet we do

not

not ſay, that this knowledge is abſolutely neceſſary in a Preacher of the Goſpel; for *Auguſtine* himſelf, one of the moſt eminent amongſt the Fathers, had but little skill in the *Greek tongue*, and none at all in the Hebrew: And ſo it hath been with divers godly painful Miniſters from time to time, whoſe faithful labours notwithſtanding God hath bleſſed with great ſucceſs.

Sixthly, Humane Learning and Reaſon is profitable and uſeful for inſtructing and convincing *Pagans* and *Heathens*, who do not yet acknowledge the Chriſtian Faith, and divine Authority of the Scriptures. Thus divers of the Ancient Fathers, as *Tertullian*, *Origen*, *Lactantius*, *Baſil*, *Cyril*, *Auguſtine*, &c. confuted the learned *Heathen Philoſophers* out of their own Writings, as *David* killed *Goliah* with his own Sword. And in latter times *Aquinas*, *Grotius*, *Morney*, and others, have moſt learnedly and excellently improved the true ſayings of the *Heathen Philoſophers* againſt themſelves, and have demonſtrated the verity and reaſonableneſs of the Chriſtian Religion, which is alſo endeavoured in this Treatiſe.

Seventhly, Granting the Scripture to be the infallible Word of God (as it is generally acknowledged all Chriſtians) we ought to exerciſe our Reaſon in ſearching theſe ſacred Books, looking into the *Grammar* of the Scripture, or the forms of expreſſion, to find out the truth of them; and having an eye to the *Logick* of the Scripture, to the ſcope, context, and conſent thereof, comparing Scripture with Scripture, and interpreting the more obſcure places by the clearer, according to the Analogy of Faith, that ſo we may be able to diſcern and judge of things that differ,

differ, *Epheſ.* 5. 17. 1 *Theſ.* 5. 21. *Acts* 17. 11. *Heb.* 5. 14. which is the duty of every true Chriſtian, as hath been proved in the twelfth Chapter of this Treatiſe. In which reſpect we hold that there is a very good uſe of Reaſon, (*w*) ſo far are we from teaching, that men in ſearching into the meaning of the Scriptures muſt become either Fools, or Mad-men, or *Enthuſiaſts*.

(w) *Hæc autem exploratio atque examinatio doctrinarum fieri non poteſt niſi adhibita rationis judicio quæ judicat de veritate conſequentiarum per ſua principia de veritate rerum; non innitendo principiis ſibi notis extra verbum Dei, ſed in Scriptura ſacra traditis.* B. Daven. in Coll. 2. 8.

Eighthly and laſtly, We acknowledge that the Light of Nature and Reaſon is neceſſary both in religious and moral things, as it is ſeated in man; every man that comes into the world being enlightened by the God of Nature, *John* 1. 9. And this Light of Nature and Reaſon is neceſſary in two reſpects.

Firſt, As a paſſive qualification of the ſubject for Faith and Repentance; for there cannot be Faith and Repentance in a Stone or Beaſt that wants the Principle of Reaſon; this makes man in a paſſive capacity fit for Grace, although he hath no active ability for it.

And then ſecondly, It is neceſſary by way of an Inſtrument, for we cannot believe or apprehend Chriſt unleſs we have a principle of Reaſon in us; it being without controverſie that an act of underſtanding or knowledge doth alwayes accompany true Faith; *Through Faith* (ſaith the Apoſtle, *Heb.* 11. 3.) *we underſtand that the Worlds were framed by the Word of God.*

CHAP.

CHAP. XXII.

Wherein humane Reaſon *comes far ſhort, and is abuſed in reference to* Divine things.

HAving in the Chapter immediately going before mentioned divers particulars, wherein humane Reaſon and knowledge is ſerviceable to the intereſt of *Chriſtianity*, we ſhall now in the laſt place tell you particularly and plainly, wherein humane Reaſon and Knowledge comes far ſhort in matters divine and ſupernatural, ſumming up in a little room what hath been more largely ſet forth on this ſubject both in this and other Treatiſes.

* *The defects that are in mans Reaſon.*

* Firſt then the great Myſtery of the Trinity, the Incarnation of the Son of God, and Juſtification of Sinners by his Righteouſneſs cannot be found out by the Light of Nature and Reaſon; it never entered into the heart of a natural man to conceive of them; but theſe things are of meer ſupernatural revelation, 1 *Cor.* 2. 9, 10. Though it be true, that when through Faith we have believed them, Reaſon will alſo ſubſcribe to the truth of them, as being revealed by the God of truth, who cannot lye; yet all the Reaſon of Men and Angels could never have found out nor come to the knowledge of theſe Myſteries if God himſelf had not revealed them: There are ſome Articles of our Faith that are both believed and taken up

up by Reaſon, as namely, that there is a God, that the World was created by him, and that the ſoul of man is immortal; but then there are other Articles of our Faith which are only believed, as the myſtery of the Trinity, the Incarnation of Chriſt, *&c.* which our weak reaſon cannot take up or apprehend. There is a wonderful depth in the myſteries of the Goſpel; this Well is ſo deep (as the Woman told Chriſt in another caſe, *John* 4. 11.) that unleſs we have the Bucket of the Spirit of God to draw with, we ſhall never be able, by the improvement of our Reaſon, to bring up this living Water; unleſs we have the Spirit of Light and Power to dig with, we ſhall never find this ſpiritual Treaſure. Nature indeed will go far, and the improved natural man may do much by his Skill and Induſtry in finding out and diſcovering the myſteries of Nature, things that are excellent in their kind: Such a man (as *Job* ſpeaks, *Chap.* 28. 7, 11, 12, 13, 21, 23) can dig out of the Earth Gold, Iron, Braſs, Brimſtone, and all ſorts of Metals; nay, he can ſee further then the Birds of prey, which though they be quick-ſighted, yet can they not behold theſe Metals which he by his Skill can diſcover and dig out of the earth. There is a path which no Fowl knoweth, and which the Vultures eye hath not ſeen, yet Man traceth it by his Skill, yea, the thing that is hid bringeth he forth to light; but yet he cannot by all his natural Reaſon and Skill (though never ſo much improved) ſpiritually and ſavingly diſcern the excellency of Chriſt, and the myſteries of the Goſpel. But where ſhall Wiſdom be found, namely, Chriſt, who is the eſſential Wiſdom of God, and who is made of God Wiſdom to us? And where is the place of underſtanding? Go

over

over the whole Creation, and every part of it, and it will ſay, It is not in me; man knoweth not the price thereof, neither is it found in the Land of the living; it is not within the reach or ſphere of the wiſeſt natural men in the World, they cannot dig this Mine, or find out this Treaſure; they cannot comprehend this divine and ſupernatural myſtery, for it is hid from the eyes of all that are living, and kept cloſe from the Fowls of the Air: Whence then cometh this divine Wiſdom? Where is it to be had, and how ſhall we attain to it? He tells you, *ver.* 23. that this Wiſdom is in the Boſom of God, and muſt be revealed by him, or elſe we ſhall never ſavingly apprehend it; *God underſtandeth the way, and knoweth the place thereof*; for Wiſdom was with him from eternity, *when he made a decree for the rain, and a way for the lightning of the thunder; then did he prepare it, yea, and ſearched it out*: Or as it is, *Prov.* 8. 29, 30. a place parallel with this of *Job*, *When he gave to the Sea his decree, that the waters thereof ſhould not paſs his Command; when he appointed the foundations of the earth, then was I by him* (ſaith Chriſt) *as one brought up with him, and I was daily his delight, rejoycing alwayes before him.*

Secondly, The Light of Reaſon cannot truly diſcover the ſinfulneſs of mans nature, and the deep deceits of his heart, which are only made known by Scripture light and revelation, *Jer.* 17. 9. darkneſs cannot diſcover darkneſs, nor can corruption diſcover it ſelf. Indeed by the Light of Nature (improved by education and the knowledge of humane Arts and Sciences) men may diſcover a great languiſhment and infirmity that is come upon them. Divers learned Writers have ſhewed, that many of the

the ancient *Platoniſts* agree in this, That mans Soul is now vaſſalized to the ſenſes and affections, and that her wings are cut, ſo that ſhe cannot mount upward by divine Contemplation; but as for the nature and kind of original corruption, and how it was brought upon us, together with the woful concomitants and effects thereof, theſe can only be known by Scripture light: And therefore the Apoſtle ſaith, *He had not known luſt to be ſin, had not the Law ſaid, Thou ſhalt not luſt.*

The Light of Nature and Reaſon is altogether inſufficient to preſcribe or ſet down the true worſhip of God: Hence it is that God doth ſo often forbid us to walk after our own imaginations in the matters of his Houſe and Worſhip; and the Apoſtle calls it *will-worſhip*, Col. 2. 23. when a mans own will or invention is the framer of it. If men be taught only by the Light of Nature (*x*) they can know nothing certainly and ſoundly touching the worſhip of the true God, but their thoughts and apprehenſions will be confuſed and carnal, and exceeding unſuitable to God, who is a holy Spirit, and will be worſhipped in ſpirit and truth: And though there were a few amongſt the Heathens, that were not altogether ſo mad as the common people, yet the moſt excellent of them did exceedingly wander and go aſtray, deviſing and contriving the worſhip of God according to their own vain opinion and imagination. *Socrates* the wiſeſt Philoſopher; in *Zenophon*, praiſed the Anſwer of *Apollo*, wherein he willed that every man ſhould worſhip the Gods after the manner and cuſtom of his Country or City. But oh what folly and madneſs is this! How came

(x) *Vide* Calvin. *Inſtit. lib.* 1. *cap.* 5. *ſect.* 12.

mortal men by this power, that of their own authority they ſhould determine that which far ſurmounteth the wiſdom of the World! Natural Reaſon would have the worſhip of God ſenſible and pleaſing to the eye, and is apt to appoint other Mediators between God and Man beſides Chriſt, and to perform all duties of worſhip in its own ſtrength, and by way of compenſation and ſatisfaction to God; and therefore in this caſe Reaſon comes far ſhort, and is no competent Judge how and after what manner God will be worſhipped; though we deny not, but the Light of Reaſon and moral Prudence (when God hath appointed his own worſhip) may be very uſeful and inſtrumental in ordering ſome civil circumſtances relating thereunto, and in the exerciſe of Church affairs. Nor doth that Text, *Rom.* 12. 1. argue, that mans reaſon can deviſe or find out that worſhip and ſervice which is acceptable to the moſt wiſe and holy God; this is more then the greateſt *Rationaliſts* and *Moraliſts* amongſt the Heathen Philoſophers could ever attain to; but whereas the Apoſtle calls it, λογικὴν λατρείαν, *Your reaſonable ſerving of God*, he underſtands that ſervice which is not only or chiefly with the body, but with the mind and ſpirit, for ſo will God be worſhipped, *John* 4. 23. And ſo *Chryſoſtome* and others call this reaſonable ſervice, *Spiritualem cultum*, ſpiritual worſhip or ſervice, when the mind and Spirit is offered up to God. This interpretation is further confirmed out of 1 *Pet.* 2. 2. where the Apoſtle *Peter* calls the Word of God, λογικὸν γάλα, *The reaſonable*, that is, ſpiritual *milk*; and *ver.* 5. The ſervice or ſacrifice of a Chriſtian is ſpiritual, and ſo it is acceptable unto God: And 'tis well obſerved by divers learned Interpreters

terpreters on *Rom.* 12. 1. that there is a ſecret oppoſition between this *reaſonable ſervice* and ἐθελοθρησκία, or *will-worſhip*, as it is called, *Col.* 2. 23. when men invent a religious worſhip ſuitable to their own carnal humours and intereſts; whereas that is the *reaſonable ſervice* of God, which is ſpiritual and agreeable to his will: This is the true meaning of the Text, and yet we acknowledge that the Chriſtian worſhip (under the new Teſtament adminiſtration) may be truly ſaid to be a more reaſonable ſervice, whereof a better reaſon may be rendered then the ſacrifices of unreaſonable beaſts under the Law, and withal that thoſe Chriſtians (who by good advice and reaſon) do the things that are agreeable to the will and command of God are they that offer up a reaſonable ſervice to God.

Fourthly, Thoſe Principles of Nature and Reaſon that are left in men, do not enable them exactly and perfectly to perform natural and civil actions, without the general aſſiſtance of God, in whom we live, and move, and have our being: And then as for actions ſpiritually and Evangelically good, man by the power of Nature and Reaſon is wholly unable to perform them, for without Faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe God. This plainly appears by all thoſe places of Scripture which declare and ſet forth the ſinfulneſs and corruption of every unregenerate mans nature and eſtate, and alſo by thoſe Texts which ſpeak of Grace, and Converſion, and Regeneration, as the ſole work of Gods Almighty power, and the effectual operation of his Spirit, which is put forth and manifeſted in all thoſe that truly believe, *Epheſ.* 1. 19. *The natural man* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are*

fooliſhneſs to him; neither can he know them becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned, 1 Cor. 2. 14. By the natural man here (as *Calvin* and others truly obſerve) he meaneth not properly a man addicted to groſs and ſenſual luſts, but every man that is endued only with the Light of Nature and Reaſon, and hath not the Spirit of Chriſt dwelling in him, yea, the moſt rational improved natural man; this is evident, becauſe the natural man is oppoſed to the ſpiritual man, or him that is born of God, and acted by the Spirit of God. The word ψυχικὸς ſignifies properly not ſuch a man as is exceeding carnal and groſs in ſin and ſenſuality, but *ſouly* man, an improved rational man, or a man made up only of Reaſon; one that doth *ex colere animam*, ſuch as *Plato*, *Ariſtotle*, and *Tully* were: It is meant of every unregenerate man, who is ruled by the Spirit of this World, and the meer Principles of Nature and Reaſon, and who cannot ſpiritually diſcern and receive the great myſteries of the Goſpel, but is offended therewith: Nay, the wiſer men are in their own imaginations and reaſonings, the vainer they are, and the more oppoſite to the grace and ſimplicity of the Goſpel of Chriſt, which ſtands not in the wiſdom of men, but in the power of God. *The other day*, ſaith *Chryſoſtome*, *I heard a certain* Chriſtian *diſcourſing ridiculouſly with a* Greek, *each of them in their diſcourſe prejudicing his own Cauſe, for the* Greek *ſpake that which the* Chriſtian *ſhould have ſaid, and the* Chriſtian *ſpake that which the* Greek *ſhould have ſaid; for the Queſtion between them being about* Paul *and* Plato; *the* Greek *endeavoured to prove, that* Paul *was rude and unlearned; but the* Chriſtian, *through his ſimplicity, would prove, that* Paul *was far more learned and eloquent*

quent then Plato; *and ſo the* Greek *would obtain the victory, if the* Chriſtian's *Reaſons ſhould prevail; for if* Paul *were more learned then* Plato *in humane Arts and Sciences, then might men object, that he overcame not the World through Grace, but through humane Eloquence: Therefore,* ſaith this Father, *when the* Greeks *ſhall object, that the Apoſtles were rude and unlearned, ſimple obſcure perſons, of no great reaſon nor parts, let us freely acknowledge it as the truth, for this is not their reproach, but their glory, that being ſuch they yet overcame the Learned men, the Wiſe men, the Philoſophers, the Rhetoricians, the Orators, the Princes, and all the World; for when any thing is done above the power of Nature, this doth exceedingly ſet forth and magnifie the Grace of God.*

Fifthly, A Chriſtian ſhould ſo far deny his natural Reaſon and Wiſdom in things ſpiritual, that his aſſent to the Truths and Myſteries of the Goſpel may be the aſſent of Faith, as to a divine Teſtimony, and not the aſſent of meer Reaſon: The immediate ground of this aſſent ſhould not be the ſelf-evidence of the thing teſtified in the Scripture to mans reaſon, but the divine authority of God teſtifying. That which is the formal object of Faith, as the Schools ſpeak, is the firſt truth, or God himſelf revealing his mind to us. Suppoſe a truth taught in the Scripture be likewiſe demonſtrated to my reaſon by Philoſophical Arguments, as namely, That God created and governs the World, and that the Soul of man is immortal, my aſſent to theſe Truths is ſo far the aſſent of divine Faith, as it is grounded and bottom'd upon the authority of a divine Teſtimony. As for that aſſent which is meerly grounded upon Philoſophical reaſon and demonſtration, it is not di-

vine Faith, but only humane Faith and Reason.

Sixthly, Our Reason is so imperfect, so defective, so apt to mistake in divine and spiritual matters, that we must not make our apprehensions (though under pretence of Reason) the rule of what we will receive for the Word and revealed Will of God, and what we will reject; but what the Scripture holds forth must be the rule of our apprehensions, though we cannot comprehend the same by our weak depraved reason and understanding: otherwise we subject the authority of Gods Truth to our own weak shallow apprehensions, and believe him not because he hath said it, but because we by our reason can comprehend it, and this is dangerous and destructive to the faith of a Christian, for the Scriptures do reveal those things that are above our reason. What reason of Men or Angels could ever have thought of such a thing as the three Divine Persons of the Godhead, the personal union of God and Man in the Mediator, the imputation of *Adam*'s sin to his Posterity, and the imputation of the glorious Righteousness of Christ to poor Sinners for their justification? *Without all controversie great is the mystery of godliness*, 1 Tim. 3. 16. But what great mystery is there in it, if we by our shallow reason can comprehend it? *We must pray for Grace*, saith Mr. *Fox* (*y*) the Author of the Book of Martyrs, *that we may rightly understand the Gospel*: So strange is this Doctrine to carnal Reason, so contrary to the World, so many enemies it hath, that except the Spirit of God from above do powerfully reveal it, Learning cannot reach it, Wisdom is offended,

(*y*) *In his Preface to* Luther *on the* Galatians.

Nature

Nature is aſtoniſhed, Devils and Men do oppoſe and perſecute it; briefly, as there is no way to life ſo eaſie, ſo there is none ſo hard; eaſie to whom it is given from above, hard to carnal Senſe and Reaſon not yet inſpired. And *Luther* himſelf in his Commentary on the *Galatians* hath many notable ſayings touching Faith and Reaſon; In this caſe of believing the Goſpel (ſaith he) we muſt ſilence Reaſon which is an enemy to Faith, which alſo in temptations of ſin and death leaneth not to the righteouſneſs of Faith, for thereof it is utterly ignorant, but to her own righteouſneſs. Now as ſoon as the Law and Reaſon joyn together, Faith loſeth her Virginity, for nothing fighteth more ſtrongly againſt Faith then the Law and Reaſon: The Goſpel leadeth us beyond and above the light of the Law and Reaſon into the deep ſecrets of Faith, where the Law and Reaſon have nothing to do. Again, If ye will believe Reaſon, Reaſon will tell you, that ſuch things as God hath promiſed are impoſſible, fooliſh, weak, abſurd things: What more abſurd, fooliſh, and impoſſible, then that *Abraham* ſhould have a Son in his old age of the barren and dead Body of *Sarah*? But now Faith killeth Reaſon, and ſlayeth that Beaſt which the whole World and all Creatures cannot kill. Thus *Abraham* killed it by Faith in the Word of God, which promiſed him a Son: To this word Reaſon yielded not ſtraitway, but fought againſt Faith in him, judging it to be an abſurd impoſſible thing; but Faith wreſtled with Reaſon, and at length got the victory: *Abraham* killed and ſacrificed Reaſon, that moſt peſtilent enemy of God, and ſo muſt all the godly do. There are many things in Scripture that are quite croſs and contrary to the apprehenſions of corrupt Reaſon, and

'tis the great work of the Spirit of God to ſubdue and captivate our Reaſon to the authority of the Word of God, and the obedience of Faith. *The weapons of our warfare* (ſaith the Apoſtle, 2 *Cor.* 10. 4, 5.) *are mighty through God for the pulling down of ſtrong holds, caſting down reaſonings, and every high thing that exalteth it ſelf againſt the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Chriſt:* Thoſe ſtrong holds that ſtand out againſt the Goſpel are eſpecially two, namely, the greatneſs and power of worldly Princes and Rulers; and alſo the reaſonings and argumentations of the learned Orators and Philoſophers; both theſe muſt be ſubdued and captivated to the obedience of Faith. *Men muſt be led away like Captives* (ſaith Judicious *Calvin* on the Text) *from their own Reaſon and Will:* The word λογισμος, *reaſonings*, is very emphatical. *Quo vocabulo* (z) *ſignificantur non qualeſcunque cogitationes ſed quæ fiunt ratiocinando & diſceptando dum adhibito judicio rationis animus examinat aliquid & de eo pronuntiat, ſit ne verum an falſum, bonum an malum.* Here we may ſee plainly, that our Reaſon muſt be conquered and captivated to the obedience of the Goſpel, or elſe there can be no true Faith: Indeed Reaſon and Faith may well walk together, provided that Reaſon give Faith the upper-hand. We muſt not ſay (they are the words of a noble Writer, who makes great uſe of Reaſon to prove the truth of the Chriſtian *Religion*) (a) That becauſe *Reaſon* doth not comprehend this or that point of *Religion*, therefore we we ſhould not believe it, for this were a meaſuring of Faith

(z) Eſtius *in* 2 Cor. 10. 4, 5.

(a) Morney *de veritat. Chriſt. Religio.*

Faith by Reaſon, whereas we ought to believe the Myſteries of God that are beyond our Reaſon. To believe on God through Chriſt, what is it elſe but to ſubmit our reaſon and underſtanding to God? And thus our Reaſon muſt be a ſervant to Faith, and muſt ſtoop to the power of Faith; Faith muſt not be abaſed and ſtoop to the meaſure of Reaſon. Now when and wherein humane Reaſon and Knowledge is perverted and abuſed, and ſo comes to be prejudicial and dangerous, ſhall be here briefly repreſented in a few particulars, and ſo we will ſhut up this diſcourſe of the right uſe and abuſe of Reaſon.

** How and wherein humane Reaſon is abuſed and perverted.*

* Firſt, It is then dangerous and deſtructive to the divine Purity of the Chriſtian *Religion*, when the Opinions and Sentiments of ſome Learned Philoſophers and *Rationaliſts*, that are contrary to the Doctrine of the Goſpel, are impoſed upon us as true, as namely, the Worlds Eternity, the Stoical Fate, Purgatory after this life, the denial of the *Reſurrection* of the Body, worſhipping of Angels, and the like, having a ſhew of *Reaſon*, Wiſdom, and Humility, *Col.* 2 18, 23.

Secondly, When thoſe Principles of Nature and Philoſophy, which are true in an ordinary way, are perverted and abuſed to the rejecting of thoſe Goſpel-truths that are above Nature: Theſe Maxims and Poſitions of Philoſophers, That of nothing nothing can be made: That of privation to a habit there is no regreſſion: That a Virgin cannot conceive; though they are naturally and Phyſically true, yet in Divinity and Chriſtianity they ought not to be admitted: God created the World of nothing; our bleſſed Saviour without the help of Man

was

was born of a Virgin (as the Scripture aſſures us) *God calleth the things that are not, as if they were,* Rom. 4. 17. *Theſe bodies of ours, after they are reſolved into duſt, ſhall be raiſed up again and made like to the glorious Body of Chriſt, according to the working of God, whereby he is able even to ſubdue all things to himſelf,* Phil. 3. 21. Here Faith in Gods Omnipotency muſt be exerciſed, and *Reaſon* muſt give way to Faith. Indeed mans *Reaſon*, as now it ſtands, is ſo far from taking the juſt meaſure of Faith (which tranſcendeth natural Strength and *Reaſon*) that it cannot ſo much as take the juſt and full meaſure of Nature, nor of the leaſt of Gods Creatures in regard of that ignorance and darkneſs that is in every one of us; and therefore it is a great error to believe no further then *Reaſon* can meaſure and comprehend: For what a great way doth the truth of ſpiritual and divine things extend beyond our *Reaſon*? And even *Reaſon* it ſelf will lead us to this Point, namely, That we ſhould believe beyond *Reaſon*, I mean, thoſe things which no meer natural underſtanding or capacity can reach or attain to; and that when theſe things are revealed by God to men, which *Reaſon* could never have comprehended (no not even when it was at the beſt) the ſame *Reaſon* which could never have found them out, makes us to allow of them; it being reaſonable and fit for us to believe whatſoever God hath revealed to be true: And herein *Reaſon* teacheth us that which ſhe her ſelf neither knew nor believed, namely, by leading us to the moſt infallible Teacher, whom we ought to hear and believe.

Thirdly, It is then dangerous when a Chriſtian boaſts of his humane *Reaſon* and Knowledge, and is elated and puffed up therewith, undervaluing and ſlighting

ſlighting all others, as if their *Reaſon* and Knowledge were not comparable to his; and ſo it becomes a vain windy thing. *Knowledge* (ſaith the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 8. 1.) *puffeth up, but love edifieth. Vain man would be wiſe* (as it is in *Job* 11.12.) *though he be born like a wild Aſſes Colt.* In the *Hebrew* there is an elegant *Paranomoſia, Vain man*, or as the word may be rendered, *hollow or empty man*, though he be fooliſh and ignorant, would ſeem to be wiſe and rational if he knew how. Doubtleſs God will curſe and blaſt that profane wit and knowledge which deſpiſeth the ſimplicity of Chriſts Goſpel, and will not captivate it ſelf to the obedience of Faith.

Fourthly, When the reaſonings or rational argumentations of men are unſeaſonably and exceſſively uſed in divine things (the nature of the matter not requiring it) then are ſuch reaſonings dangerous. Hence ſome of the Fathers are juſtly cenſured (and the Schoolmen much more) for mixing and adulterating the Truths of the Goſpel with the *Reaſons* of Philoſophers, which are no better then *Paralogiſms* and Impoſtures, if mixed with and added to the pure Word of God, and the great and glorious Myſteries of Chriſt.

Fifthly, Then do men abuſe their humane *Reaſon* and Knowledge, when they uſe needleſs *ſubtilties, quirks*, and *quiddities* in debating the great Truths of the Goſpel, which ſhould rather be humbly believed, admired, and adored, then ſubtilly diſputed. Even amongſt the *Heathens* themſelves, and in all *Religions*, they have had ſome ſacred Myſteries and Secrets that were to be adored, and not curiouſly pried into, and diſputed by the ſubtil reaſonings of men; and whoever did profanely diſpute thereof were ſeverely puniſhed.

Sixthly,

Sixthly, and Laſtly, Mans *Reaſon* is abuſed and perverted, and proves to be of dangerous conſequence when it is made, not only an Inſtrument, but a Judge, in matters of Faith; ſome there are that ſeem to depreſs *Reaſon* too much; but on the other ſide the *Socinians* exalt it too high, for they make it not only an *Inſtrument*, but a *Judge*, and thereupon reject and contemn the greateſt myſteries of the Chriſtian *Religion*, becauſe they cannot fathom and comprehend them by their *Reaſon*. 'Tis true there are ſome that ſay, *Religio eſt ſumma ratio*, and there are great learned Men that have endeavoured to prove the truth of the Chriſtian *Religion* by the Light of *Reaſon*; and certainly if we can by *Reaſon* prove that there is any *Religion* at all, we may by the ſame reaſon prove the truth and excellency of the Chriſtian *Religion* (as I have ſhewed in this Treatiſe) but yet mans *Reaſon* is but a weak, glimmering, uncertain thing in compariſon of Faith. *Ratio recta eſt ratio lumine Spiritus ſancti directa.* Nor muſt we confound the *Inſtrument* and the *Judge*. Holy Truths, Scripture Truths and Myſteries they are divine and ſupernatural, though hammered out and improved by *Reaſon*: As the Smith that takes Golden plate and beats it into what ſhape he pleaſeth, his Hammer doth not make it to be Gold, for ſo it was before, but only Gold of ſuch a ſhape; ſo *Reaſon* doth not make a Truth divine, or add any thing to the divine authority of it, but only holds it forth and declares it in ſuch a way or method. It is with Faith and *Reaſon* (ſaith a Learned man) as with the mould that is at the root of a barren fruitleſs tree, take the mould out and throw in dung or other *compoſt*, and then put the mould in again, and it will much help the tree which hindered

hindered it before; thus lay aſide *Reaſon* at firſt, and receive the Truth of God by Faith, and afterward improve Faith by *Reaſon*, and ſo it will be of excellent uſe to a Chriſtian. Divine Truths are not founded on *Reaſon*, but on the Authority of God in the Scriptures; yet *Reaſon* may help to bear them up, as you ſee the Elm or Wall bear up the Vine, but the Elm or Wall doth not bring forth the fruit, only the Vine doth that. As long therefore as the Light of Nature and *Reaſon* is not the *Rule*, but ruled and ſquared by the Word of God (as it ought to be) there is no danger; but when mans *Reaſon* is made the *Rule*, and divine Myſteries are vaſſaliz'd and ſubjected thereunto, this muſt needs be prepoſterous and dangerous; and therefore to be abhorr'd and avoided by all ſober Chriſtians, whoſe Faith ſhould not ſtand in humane Wiſdom and *Reaſon*, but in the Demonſtration and Power of the Spirit of God.

FINIS.

Books ſold by Thomas Paſſenger *at the three Bibles on* London-Bridge.

A *French* and *Engliſh* Dictionary, compoſed by Mr. *Randolph Cotgrave*, Folio.

A Mirror or Looking-glaſs for Saints and Sinners, ſhewing the juſtice of God on the one, and his mercy towards the other. Set forth in ſome thouſand of examples, by *Sam. Clark* late Miniſter of *Bennet-Finck*, *London*, in two Volumes in folio.

Royal and Practical Chymiſtry, by *Oſwaldus Crollius*, and *John Hartman*, faithfully rendred into *Engliſh*, folio, price 10. *s.*

Gods Revenge againſt Murther, by *John Reynolds*, containing thirty Tragical Stories, digeſted into ſix Books, newly reprinted, folio, price 10 *s.*

Lord *Bacon*'s Natural Hiſtory, folio, price 8 *s.*

Sandy's Travels, containing a Deſcription of the Turkiſh Empire, of *Egypt*, and the Holy Land, of the remote parts of *Italy*, and Iſlands adjoyning, folio, price 8 *s.*

Markham's Maſter-piece.

Roman Antiquities, by *Tho. Godwin*, quarto, price 2 *s.* 6 *d.*

The famous Hiſtory of the Deſtruction of *Troy*, in three Books, quarto, price 3 *s.*

Valentine and *Orſon*, price 18 *d.*

Etymologicum parvum, by *Francis Gregory*, octavo, price 3 *s.*

Chymical

Chymical Eſſayes, by *John Begumis*, price 1 *s.* 8 *d.*

Spiritual Antidotes againſt ſinful contagion, by *Tho. Doolittle*, price 18 *d.*

Pool's Dialogue betwixt a Papiſt and a Proteſtant, twelves, price bound 1 *s.*

Monaſticon Faverſhamienſe; Or a Deſcription of the Abby of *Faverſham*, octavo, price bound 18 *d.*

The Chriſtians Crown of glory; or Holineſs the way to Happineſs, octavo, price bound 18 *d.*

The Path way to Health, price bound 18 *d.*

The Complete Academy, or Nurſery of Complements, bound 1 *s.*

The Book of Knowledge in three parts, price 10 *d.*

The Book of Palmiſtry in octavo, price bound 18 *d.*

The Wiſe Virgin, being a Narrative of Gods dealing with *Martha Hatfield*, price bound 18 *d.*

The Pilgrims Port, or the weary Mans reſt in the Grave, in twelves, price bound 1 *s.*

The famous Hiſtory of the five wiſe Philoſophers, containing the Life of *Jehoſaphat*, Son of *Avenerio*, Emperor of *Corma*, and his wonderful converſion to the Chriſtian Faith.

The great Aſſize, by *Sam. Smith.*

The Delectable Hiſtory of *Amadis de Gaul.*

The pleaſant Hiſtory of *Paladine* of *England.*

The Bear-baiting of *Women.*

The Hiſtory of *Fryar Bacon* and *Fryar Bungy.*

New conceited Letters.

The Jovial Garland, containing all the neweſt Songs that are now uſed.

The

The *Penitent Prodigal*, or a gracious Reproof for Phariſaical Saints, by *J. H.*

The Chriſtians beſt Exerciſe in the worſt of times, by *J. H.*

Scarborough Spaw, being a deſcription of the nature and virtues of the *Spaw* of *Scarborough* in *Yorkſhire*, by *Doctor Wittie.*

The *French* Schoolmaſter.

Farnabies Epigrams.

Newtons Art of Logick.

Newtons Art of Rhetorick.

The famous Hiſtory of *Don Bellianis* of *Greece*, in three parts, being now compleat.

The famous Hiſtory of *Montelion*, Knight of the Oracle.

Hodders Arithmetick in twelves.

Ovid de triſtibus in Engliſh.

Biſhop *Hall's* Soliloquies, in twelves.

The Poems of *Ben. Johnſon Junior.*

A plain and familiar Expoſition of the ten Commandments, by *John Dod.*